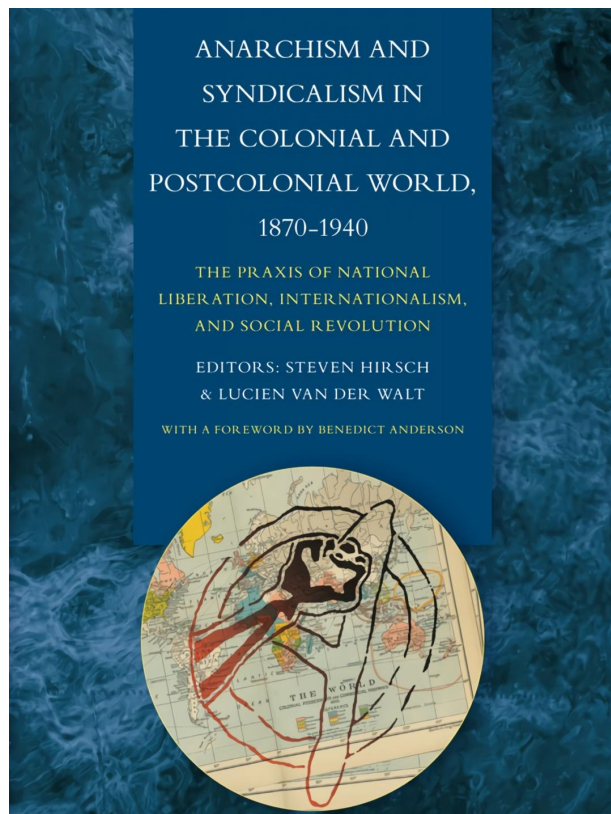# Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World, 1870–1940

The Praxis of National Liberation, Internationalism, and Social Revolution

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Preface

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If one decided, in a frivolous moment, to sketch a Borgesian version of Aesop's Fable of the Rabbit and the Tortoise, one would need only to extend their race over the horizon to an ever-receding winner's tape. The rabbit, even after many naps, would speed past the tortoise again and again. But a rabbit has a short life while a tortoise lives long and will in the end rumble-stumble past his rival's corpse. Where to? Does he think with Beckett: "I can't go on, I'll go on"?

Today it is not difficult to find very energetic, even if usually (but not always) small, self-described anarchist (or syndicalist) groups around the world, mostly in urban areas. At the same time, there are only a few places left where seriously communist parties still exist. Explaining the colossal phalanx of police and other security professionals guarding the New York Republican convention which ensured Bush's second presidential nomination, the commissioner told reporters that the real danger did not come from Communists or even *djihadi* Muslims, but from violent anarchists. From the early 1990s, scholarly interest in anarchism has produced a minor avalanche of excellent studies.

There can be little doubt that this development arose from the decay and collapse of the Soviet Union, the fall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, China's headlong rush down the yellow-brick capitalist road, Fidel Castro passing the reins to his septuagenarian younger brother, and Kim Il-sung to his son, and probably grandson too. This cataclysm, along with the fossilization of "social democracy", has encouraged many kinds of people on the left to look for hope elsewhere, and also re-engage with non-Leninist socialist traditions. All the more so, since orthodox Marxist politicians and intellectuals had long cast anarchism, "utopian" rather than "scientific", into the dustbin of history, and created a good deal of falsified historiography to ensure it stayed there.

What we are aware of now is that anarchism got an early start with the work of Fourier and Proudhon, and was "passed" by Marx and Engels until Bakunin threatened to take over the First International.

Between Marx's death and Lenin's sudden rise to power in 1917, orthodox Marxism was in the minority as far as leftist opposition to capitalism and imperialism was concerned—successful mainly in the more advanced industrial and Protestant states of Western and Central Europe, and generally pacific in its political positions. It was rather anarchism (or anarchisms—the outlook was always highly contested, despite the major contributions of Bakunin and Kropotkin) that stole hearts and headlines, first with the wave of spectacularly successful and failed assassinations of heads of states, top politicians and capitalists (from Buffalo to Harbin) under the rubric of "propaganda by the deed"; then by the rise of syndicalism with its signature theme of the revolutionary general strike, discussed by Sorel but in fact first theorised by the anarchists of the

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[1] See Joan Ungersma Halperin, *The Artist and Social Reform: France and Belgium, 1885–1898*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, 12.

1870s. In his memoirs, Léon Blum, the peaceable former socialist Prime Minister of France, could write that his generation was saturated with anarchist ideas and values.[1]

Lenin was not exactly a rabbit, but his establishment of a MarxistLeninist regime in much of former Tsardom shot orthodoxy far ahead of any competition. This was followed by the establishment of the Comintern, the Communization of much of east and central Europe, Mao's rise to autocratic power, and so on. In the standard historiography, anarchism made its last heroic and tragic stand in the Spanish Civil War. Europe's anarchism was on its last legs by the end of World War II, and finished off as a mass movement in the aftermath—for the time being at least.

What were anarchism's early advantages? Certainly not theoretical. Marx's towering theoretical contributions were widely acknowledged on the left, not least by Bakunin, who graciously called Marx the "supreme economic and socialist genius of our day" (of their relations, he later wrote, Marx "called me a sentimental idealist, and he was right; I called him gloomy, unreliable and vain, and I was right too.")[2] But in Bakunin and in Kropotkin, and others, anarchism had powerful writers and leaders; in Malatesta it had a charismatic, nomadic political activist.

Its main assets were, I believe, three. First of all was its utopian *élan*. James Ensor's masterpiece, the huge painting he completed in 1888 and entitled *Christ's Entry into Brussels, 1889*, exemplified this *élan*, not only by its hectic dates, but by the huge red banner over the popular crowds surrounding the triumphant Christ, emblazoned with *Vive La Sociale*, meaning "long live the revolutionary new society being born", and by the enigmatic, grandfatherly face of the Marquis de Sade in the lower right hand corner. About the same time, a group of Italian anarchists persuaded the elderly Emperor Pedro II of Brazil to make over land sufficient to establish utopian colonies where anarchists could live unmolested as they dreamed. (Unluckily the Emperor was soon overthrown, and his brutal republican successors quickly obliterated these *colonias*). It was surely also this spirit that made anarchism attractive to so many artists and writers, at least in Western Europe.

Second was anarchism's positive attitude towards peasants and agricultural labourers, who almost everywhere outside northern and western Europe were much larger in numbers than the urban and industrial working classes. Finally, for a long time, anarchism could be said to be more seriously internationalist than its competitor. This attitude partly arose because anarchism rode the huge waves of migration out of Europe that characterized the last 40 years before World War I: Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Poles, Jews and so on poured into the New World, round the Mediterranean, and into the empires being created by the Europeans in Asia and Africa. (Malatesta spent years in Argentina and Egypt, for example, while Marx and Engels stayed in Western Europe).

This internationalism certainly had its theoretical side, but more important, it was a matter of experience and struggle in non-European contexts and terrains. Necessarily these first generation activists found themselves often as "foreigners", and as such bringing the outside international world with them. If and when they returned to Europe, as many did, especially Italians, they brought that extra-Europe experience back home. The main thing was that they did not only work, but they constantly crossed state borders.

It is just here that we see the estimable contribution of the present volume, which focuses on anarchists in the world outside western Europe (except for the case of Ireland): the Caribbean, Peru,

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[2] Quoted in Guy Aldred (ed.), *Bakunin's Writings*, Indore/Bombay: Modern Publishers/Libertarian Book House, 1947, 92, 99.

Argentina, South Africa, Egypt, then Korea, enlaced with China and Japan, and the Ukraine.[3] In some cases, for example, the Caribbean and South Africa, the migrants could float in on such imperial, or ex-imperial, languages as English and Spanish. But Italians had to deal with Spanish in Argentina, and in Egypt with Greek, French, Arabic and English. Internationalism was only seriously possible if linguistic communication was successful. One could say that anarchists were the most productive translators of the era—out of need. *La Sociale* was no less significant.

This book offers numerous and fascinating examples of straightforward political activity and organisation—unions, federations of unions, strikes, walkouts, demonstrations, meetings, clubs, even occasional participation in electoral politics. But these activities and organisations were also understood as the social bases of the good society to come: mutual help, mutual sociability, loyalty to the comrades, a common vocabulary. But we can see an additional side of *La Sociale* by looking at Edgar Rodrigues' *Os Anarquistas: Trabalhadores italianos no Brasil*,[4] a first hand account of the life of anarchists and syndicalists in the Brazil of that era, which features a long list of plays and "musicals", staged for anarchist audiences in short-term-rented theatres in Rio and São Paulo. There were also weddings, bars, parks, and so forth. It is just here that one sees the link to the peaceable, isolated *colonias* mentioned above.

The "African" cases are especially interesting, because the anarchists' aims were much more difficult to achieve in this regard. Anarchism was brought to Egypt by Italian workers recruited for the gigantic construction project that was the Suez Canal. Direct access to the Arabicspeaking population was a huge problem, quite aside from the culture of Mediterranean Islam. Demotic Greek was a sort of *lingua franca* in the big cities, especially Alexandria, but Greek wasn't a Romance language and had its own orthography. Greeks were also not Catholics.

Gorman's chapter shows beautifully how hardly solidarity was won: by endless translations, written and oral, and constant oral practice. And won it was, with difficulty and perseverance, via "international" unions organising Arabs and Europeans, multi-lingual meetings and speeches, and even a degree of cooperation with nationalisticallyminded Egyptian intellectuals. The movement was anchored in radical and anarchist networks spanning the three sides of the Mediterranean, linking Europe and the Middle East, led strikes and helped launch communism in Egypt. As an example of its practical internationalism, there is Malatesta's remarkable involvement in Ahmad 'Urabi's 1882 revolt.

Van der Walt's fine chapter on South Africa shows another set of intractable non-European difficulties: those connected to race. How could young Scottish anarchists and syndicalists reach out to black workers when fearful white workers typically tried to secure their fragile place by forming white-only unions? Borne into South Africa by European immigrants, the anarchist and syndicalist movement never appealed to more than a small section of the whites. Indeed, its main success was when it developed into as a popular, radical, union tradition amongst the Africans, Coloured, and Indians. Sometimes cooperating with nationalists (as did the Egyptians and the Asians), it had no love for the nation-state; it sought the grail of an anti-nationalist mode of anti-imperialism, via the One Big Union.

Northeast Asia is a different story in many respects. Neither Japan nor China was ever colonized (although a substantial part of China was conquered or concessioned), but Korea, from

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[3] Today we usually think of the Ukraine as part of 'Europe,' but it was long regarded as part of the half-Asiatic empire of the tsars.

[4] Edgar Rodrigues, *Os Anarquistas: Trabalhadores italianos no Brasil*, São Paulo, Global editora e distribuidora, 1984.

1910 to 1945 was forcibly included in the realm of the Japanese "Emperor". There were plenty of Europeans around, but they were soldiers, diplomats, missionaries, teachers, journalists, and capitalists: no workers or peasants. All three countries were "Confucian" to varied extents, but their spoken languages were mutually unintelligible. The editors of this book posit Meiji-Taisho Tokyo as East Asia's counterpart to Kropotkin's London. The British capital was safer for anarchists than Paris, Madrid or Rome, and, as we shall see, radical Koreans and Chinese were safer in Tokyo than in Shanghai or Seoul.

Meiji Japan, eager to get fuller access to European philosophy, natural and social science, literature, etc., plunged into a massive endeavour of translation, not only from French and English, but also German and Russian. (Tolstoy, an anarchist favourite, arrived straight from St. Petersburg). Anarchist texts interested both the Japanese police and home-sprung radicals opposed to the authoritarian political regime: the timing is probably significant, since 1870–1939 was the noonday of anarchism and syndicalism in the West.

Japan naturally produced its own influential anarchists and syndicalists, some of high intellectual and moral calibre, and syndicalist unions, though they often came to bloody ends, but immigrants also proved key people, as Hwang nicely shows. Thousands of young Chinese, either sent by the Manchus or shipped by other means, came to study in Japan at a time when the writing of Japanese was still heavily done in *kanji*. Koreans were also brought to Japan, with the idea that this was a good way to domesticate them and ward off nationalist resistance. A small Japan-educated intelligentsia became visible as early as the late 1910s.

Books prohibited back home were usually available in the metropolis. It should also be said that newspapers played a parallel role. Already in the 1870s a global circuit of telegraphic under-ocean cables was in place, so that literate East Asians had almost immediate access to the Boer War in Africa, the Cuban rebellion in the Caribbean, and near to home the revolution in the Philippines.

What is both touching and instructive in Hwang's study, and also indicated in Dirlik's chapter on China, is actually the practical internationalism of the first generation of Korean anarchists, some of whom fled to China and linked up with Chinese comrades in an astonishingly energetic campaign to create *La Sociale*—schools, workers' colleges, libraries, cooperatives, militias, refuges and so forth. These days, when Koreans have a reputation for diehard, inward-turning nationalism, Hwang's account is really poignant. The transnational dimension of "Asian" anarchism is also stressed by Dirlik, who focuses on the role of networks and translocal connections in the making of the movement.

The next part of this book, probably more familiar to readers than the Asian and African sections, consists of four powerful studies of the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Americas, though the important North American IWW Wobblies make brief but significant appearances. What is most valuable here is the sharp contrast in experience and praxis that the authors bring out. Biondo and Toledo's description of radical politics in São Paulo from 1895 until 1935 etches especially clearly the familial tension that could arise between extremist anarchism and its pragmatic relative, syndicalism.

In Europe, the upsurge of syndicalism was mainly a response to the deepening of industrialism and the rapid growth of the urban working-class, as well as the violent state reaction to anarchism's spectacular "propaganda by the deed", in the last quarter of the 19th century. The emergence of syndicalist unions in China and Japan (in Korea, these were ruthlessly crushed) was conditioned by similar factors. Syndicalists believed that revolutionary change could only come

from the massive organisation of trade unions, and their federation in different forms, including the dream of a single "big union" of them all. Their method of action was centrally defined by the strike, local, trade or general.

Anarchists did not ignore the significance of unions, and many played active roles within them. Moreover, the roots of syndicalism lay in the anarchist wing of the First International, and a great many anarchists embraced syndicalism. Nonetheless, a vocal section of anarchists always suspected that these unions were bases for undesirable internal hierarchies, and that, too often, they focussed on short-term "economic gains"—higher wages, shorter working hours, and so on—at the expense of general social liberation.

Syndicalism flourished in São Paulo, the sole large industrial centre of a Brazil that was still overwhelmingly rural and pre-industrial, and its main concerns were often with the "working man." In some anarchist eyes, it therefore marginalized women and rural labour, and was not much interested in the general social and cultural transformation of the population. In a country dominated by a tight-knit oligarchy, and foreign capital, and with a very limited suffrage, anarchists and syndicalists were nonetheless united in their hostility to the coalition of oligarchs, capitalists, and the armed power of the state.

Laforcade's wonderful micro-study of anarchist and syndicalist radicalism in riverine Argentina in the same era forms a nice parallel to the case of São Paulo. It is instructive that he focuses not on industrial workers in the restricted sense, but rather on the longshoremen and sailors employed in coastal and riverine shipping, who held a key strategic position in a country whose internal and external commerce was heavily determined by its unusual geography. Buenos Aires stood near the meeting-point between the Atlantic Ocean and the gigantic Rio de la Plata, navigable for hundreds of miles into the interior, shared with Uruguay and Paraguay, and dotted with the riverine ports through which agricultural exports from the interior overwhelmingly passed in a largely pre-railway era. Waterfront and on-ship strikes had a capacity for inflicting "damage" on the class enemy that was unmatched by any radical group in São Paulo. One consequence was that anarchists and syndicalists found in unionism a powerful weapon, and cooperated and competed on the waterfront for many years.

In both studies, we see the crucial role that immigration played in developing communication with European comrades, especially in Italy, Portugal and Spain. But we are also shown how the experience of being "foreign" created a strong stimulus for assimilation to local conditions and for developing solidarity across ethno-linguistic lines, particularly in the face of official efforts to create a deep divide between "foreign" trouble-makers and loyal, nationalist-minded "citizens," paralleling, for example, the efforts in Egypt to unite "foreign" and "local" labour.

To the cases of São Paulo and Buenos Aires, Shaffer's original chapter provides an impressive contrast. He describes and compares two very different types of transnational radical networks that grew up on the fringes of the rapidly expanding US empire in the Americas. The first linked Cuba with Puerto Rico, southern Florida (Tampa mainly), and Panama, that Yankee imperialism snatched out of Colombia's hands to enable the creation of the inter-oceanic Panama Canal. Small places, without big industrial cities, all controlled by the US after 1903; huge immigration from rural Spain to Cuba in the 1880s and 1890s, and large Cuban emigration to southern Florida and Panama later on. Hence a network in which "language" was no obstacle, but rather a source of solidarity across state lines. In this context, syndicalism was a powerful force, straddling borders, and conflict between anarchist "purism" and syndicalist unionism was rare.

Anarchism and syndicalism had come to Cuba early, with the wave of immigration from anarchist Catalonia, above all. But almost at once it faced the problem of nationalism in a way that is invisible in Brazil and Argentina. Anarchists had defended immigration against creole nationalism, and if they initially hesitated to support Martí's national revolution against Spanish colonialism, they eventually came round on anti-imperialist grounds, playing a central role. Curiously enough, the American occupation in 1898 allowed the anarchists to develop some favourite traditional themes, the condition of women, especially those working in the tobacco factories of Cuba and Tampa, the pitiable condition of children's health and education, and so forth. At the same time, bound by the Spanish language it also moved easily across state boundaries, and created a dense network of communication, financial support, and educational activities that crossed over into the southeast tip of the USA and across the Caribbean to the Canal Zone.

Shaffer's contrasting case developed around and across the border between the US and Mexico, especially once the Mexican Revolution got under way. Here we find syndicalism showing up, especially in the oil-fields along the Caribbean coast and in the largest urban conglomerations. Doubtless, this was partially the result of generally close ties with the syndicalist Wobblies themselves, who included a significant number of native Spanish speakers and well as bilingual Anglos in the American border states between California and Texas, who also were committed to internationalism.

Hirsch's moving chapter on Peru makes "anarcho-syndicalism" its basic subject. Facing the remote southern Pacific rather than the heavily criss-crossed Atlantic, Peru experienced very little like the vast European migrations into Brazil, Argentina, and Cuba. On the other hand, it had a huge native population, which had long been extirpated in Cuba and Argentina, and been completely marginalized in coastal Brazil. Hence it faced a very different kind of nationalist question— one far closer to that confronting the movement in Egypt and South Africa, where Europeans were a small minority.

The origins of Peruvian anarchism and syndicalism therefore have some features comparable to the three previous Latin American and Caribbean cases, but others startlingly different. On the one hand, it was brought to Peru not by poor *émigrés* but by an upper-class Peruvian intellectual, Manuel González Prada, who spent 7 years of self-exile (1891–1898) in Spain and France. There he developed close contacts with radical leftists just at the time when syndicalism was in the ascendant at the base and when anarchism still had a strong influence in intellectual circles. On the other hand, at the end of the 19th century, Lima and the nearby port-city of Callao were starting to follow the earlier path of São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Johannesburg—industrialising big city agglomerations increasingly connected to foreign capitalist investments in mines and other export industries.

In Hirsch's narrative there are three themes of unusual interest. The first is that, well before any other political group, the anarcho-syndicalists made determined efforts to reach out to, and create solidarity, with the indigenous populations, both in the former Inca capital of Cuzco in the remote highlands and in urban coastal towns where migrations from the interior were beginning. This cannot have been easy, since few people of Spanish descent mastered either Quechua or Aymara, and the cultural gap between the highlands and the coast was truly vast.

Here a comparison is warranted with Brazil and Cuba, as well as South Africa. In the 1880s, Brazil and Cuba were the last in the world legally to end slavery. Shaffer shows how the Cuban anarchists sought to deal with the race question, although Toledo and Biondi do not mention the large population of urban blacks along the country's northeast coast. Yet the blacks in both coun-

tries were far closer in religion and language to the dominant whites than anything comparable in Peru. In South Africa, the indigenous African majority (and African workers in particular) were culturally distinct, yet, as van der Walt shows, the latter were nonetheless championed by and increasingly central in the local anarchist and syndicalist movement.

Second, Hirsch underlines the Peruvian radicals' close ties with their counterparts in neighbouring Chile—at a time when the governments of the two countries were ferociously hostile to one another. Finally, the author underscores the serious efforts to empower and succour women, especially women workers, as well as to carry out the traditional anarchist endeavours to create a new culture by building schools, pamphleteering, literacy campaigns, and all the sociability characteristic of *La Sociale.*

Why is there a chapter on Ireland in this book? Morphologically, it can hardly be called a colony in the standard sense, parallel to, say South Africa, Indonesia, Syria, or Mozambique. It had its own parliament in the 18th century, and after the Reform Act and the end of legal discrimination against Catholics, both happening in the 1830s, it had a powerful electorally-based presence in Westminster. From the 18th century on some of the most outstanding writers in the UK were Irishmen too, including Swift, Burke, Sheridan, Wilde, and Joyce. Immigration into Ireland from Britain was negligible, while Irish emigration into Britain (and the USA) from the 19th century on has been massive. By 1900, only a very small minority, in the far west of the island, spoke Gaelic rather than English. What marked most of the island off from Britain was the attachment to an often cruelly persecuted Catholicism and its poverty-stricken agricultural economy. It was one of the earliest European places where a militant nationalist movement was born.

O'Connor's sober text makes the link, not through anarchism (which is not much mentioned) bur rather through syndicalism, even though, by his own account, few Irish worker radicals called themselves syndicalists. It appears in the decade before World War I, at a time when syndicalism was a major social force in Catholic Western Europe— France, Italy, and Spain, and when the Wobblies were a household word in the USA to which so many Irish people had fled during and after the great famine of the 1840s. It was also inextricably linked to the rising mobilisation of Irish nationalist identity, and hostility to British domination—even of the local branches of powerful trade unions controlled from across the Irish Sea.

O'Connor's work shows us some parallels with South America, and to an extent South Africa— radical unions centred in the big commercial and industrial port-cities of Belfast and Dublin; and the strategy of seizing for workers' control, not so much of factories, as of the arteries of transportation, shipping and railways above all, in an economy dependent on the export of agricultural products, as well as cattle and horses. In syndicalist fashion, it was thought possible to create a powerful central transport workers' union which could then expand to include smaller unions and eventually agricultural labour. Hence, the birth of the Wobblyish goal of One Big Union.

The rapid rise of radical Irish syndicalism intersected with the onset of the hitherto largest and bloodiest war in human history, which provided an opportunity or two for armed rebellions against London. First came the hopeless Easter Uprising of 1916, which charismatic syndicalist labour leader James Connolly quixotically joined with a few hundred followers, leading to his execution. Then, in the immediate aftermath of the Armistice, came the reinvigorated IRA's guerrilla war for independence, which ended with the independence of the Catholic two thirds of Ireland, and London's continued control of Protestant Ulster. Syndicalist labour played only a minor role in the war, and then faced the determination of the dominant Catholic bourgeoisie

to cement its power, and the massive hostility of the Catholic Church to any kind of radicalism, especially as Lenin was now in power in the Soviet Union. Yet it was a potent force.

Finally, and this is a lovely surprise, there is a brilliant chapter by Shubin on the anarchist movement led by the Ukrainian Nestor Makhno from Tsardom's collapse in 1917 to its crushing by Lenin and Trotsky in 1921 (almost the same period as that between the Easter Uprising and the War for Independence in Ireland). Shubin tells the reader that early Russian anarchism grew out of the *narodnik* movement of the 1860s and 1870s, but was completely destroyed by the Tsarist police, and was only revived a generation later, with strongholds, especially in the Ukraine. Literate Russians (in the broad vague sense) were certainly aware of the Russian roots of contemporary anarchism—Bakunin and Kropotkin—but their traces are only dimly visible in this account.

The uniqueness of Makhno—for this book—is that he came to power in large parts of the Ukraine thanks to an organised armed force which he led with brio. The core of this armed base may explain why he was usually hostile to Ukrainian nationalists, who were notoriously anti-Semitic as well as navel-gazing. The men and women who comprised the Makhnovist army were ethnic Ukrainian and other peasants, some urban workers, as well as local Jews and even a substantial number of Cossacks, whose own ethnic origins were a wild *mélange* of different linguistic and ethnic groups. (Yet the Tsars had often used the Cossacks for pogroms against the Jews). Like the movements in China, Cuba, Egypt, Ireland, Peru, South Africa and elsewhere, it sought to organise beyond nationalist categories.

Makhno's army was partially made possible by Berlin's pulverization of the Tsar's armies, ending with Lenin's and Trotsky's signing the humiliating treaty of Brest-Litovsk to prevent further German incursions, especially in the Ukraine. Germany's own collapse towards the end of 1918, let loose a vast swarm of men with weapons and military experience in the old empire, for Makhno, as well as the Bolsheviks and Whites, to recruit.

The immediate onset of the Civil War gave Makhno further room to manoeuvre, between Reds and Whites—for a while. Shubin gives two striking examples of how Makhno used his military power beyond the battlefield. Anti-Semitic killers, rapists and looters, even when they appeared in his own army, were liable to execution out of hand. At the same time, Makhno ordered a massive distribution of land to the peasants and agricultural labourers well before the Bolsheviks passed similar decrees. Without military power, this distribution was scarcely possible. Only in Manchuria in the late 1920s amongst the Korean forces, and then in the 1930s, in Civil War Spain, did anarchism have comparable power and opportunities.

One crucial thematic throughout this book was the rise of nationalism—in Canton, Tokyo, Seoul, Odessa, Dublin, Havana, Cairo, Barcelona and Cape Town—in the springtime of anarchism. For all its genuine internationalism, anarchism had to deal with a force which it did not wholly comprehend, and had some good reasons to suspect. Alliances, as this book shows, were possible in many places, perhaps especially where anarchists were themselves "natives." But it was a good deal harder where anarchists and syndicalists had left their native lands. Still, they adapted. In the chapters on Latin America we can observe them making international links, for example, between Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, Chile and Peru, and in Cuba and Spain. In China, Cuba, Korea, Ireland and Ukraine, they played an important role in "independence" wars.

And now? The editors of this book begin its time-frame in around 1870 and close it in 1940. Readers will recognize 1940 as the year after the bloody triumph of Franco's armies in Spain (and the first year of fascism's military domination of most of Europe). Was the Spanish Civil War

perhaps the last international war? Volunteers from many places fought on both sides—South Africa's poet Roy Campbell for Franco, France's André Malraux for the dying Republic. This book shows, in a poignant sentence or two, something truly amazing— young Chinese, anarchists and not, joining the Republic of Spain's struggle on the other side of the world.

But in fact, as these chapters also show, classical anarchism was entering a relative decline from the late 1920s, perhaps because it usually eschewed the ruthless discipline and centralization promoted by the Comintern. In an age of mass militarization, vastly enhanced police power aided by technological innovation, and militarized nationalisms, anarchism appeared to have less and less relevance. In the subsequent era of the Cold War, neither of the opposing blocs, which also included satellites in the ex-colonial world and satellite parties, paid much attention to anarchism—consigned by historian Eric Hobsbawm, with some teardrops of nostalgia, to the category of "primitive rebels". Not a single post-World War II nationalist revolution was led by anarchism (although in some, like Korea, it still played an important role)—unsurprisingly since all these movements aspired to become "nation-states" within the United Nations, no matter what their ideological orientation.

It may be that this situation was a kind of blessing in disguise. This year, for the first time, South Africa, ruled by former eminences of the nationalist ANC (African National Congress), with the support of the Communist Party, has been designated the most unequal society in the world, narrowly outpacing the traditional "champion", Lula's Brazil. Ireland is virtually bankrupt, Egypt is in ruinous shape under the endless dictatorship of Mubarak. Neither La Kirchner's Argentina, Garcia's Peru, "Orange" Ukraine, gerontocratic Cuba, nor deeplydivided Korea offer much reason for optimism. But anarchism and syndicalism cannot in any way be blamed.

In Paris, in May 1968, one of the student activists' most famous slogans was: "May the last capitalist be strangled with the guts of the last bureaucrat". Behind the Roger Corman imagery we can see something inherited from the time of Proudhon and Bakunin: hostility to the state, any state, as a hierarchical institution of enormous power with an unappeasable hunger for more of it. Another slogan was: "Liberty for the Imagination", with its retro-echo of Lennon.

Anarchism in its heyday would have been delighted with this kind of rhetorical effervescence. The US of the short 1960s created, probably without much memory of American anarchism, Make Love Not War, with the scent of *La Sociale* around it. Old anarchists were often strong about Free Love, at least in principle, even if in practice it was much messier than they had expected. Nonetheless, "liberation" for women, then a bit later for gays and lesbians, as well as oppressed ethno-linguistic minorities, drew on anarchism's utopian *élan* and adhesion to the idea of self-rule by smaller, head-to-head communities and friendly "horizontal" relations with others of the same type.

Meanwhile, the world was changing rapidly in ways that partly reverberated with the world of 1870–1940. First and foremost was the *tsunami* of cross-national migrations after World War II, no longer mainly from the North to the South but vice versa, driven from behind by fear and misery and drawn ahead by hope and capitalism's hunger for cheap labour. We can see here certain reflections of themes dominating this book. Poor Chinese learned Spanish, Indonesians Japanese, Filipinos Arabic, Mozambicans Xhosa or English, Turks German, *Ivoiriens* French, and so on.

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[5] Apichai Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners: Immigration and Its Impact on Japanese Democracy*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

But the processes did not work only in one direction. Apichai Shipper's fine recent *Fighting for Foreigners: Immigration and its Impact on Japanese Democracy* book shows these processes perfectly.[5] While the scornful Thai, Persian, Indian, Filipino and Indonesian national embassies did less than nothing for their despised fellow-citizens, especially if they were illegal immigrants, and the Japanese national state, the mega-corporations and the *yakuza* exploited and abused them, it was precisely a fascinating *mélange* of ordinary Japanese who came to their aid, perhaps as in an anarchist's dream-world: unions, angry lawyers and doctors, local governments, church-people from the Christian minority, NGOS and so on. The immigrants' national solipsism was also diluted in many ways, not least because the Filipinos came to understand their Bengali opposite numbers as in the same boat and helped by the same dedicated Japanese, not abstractly in the manner of "human rights rhetoric", but with human solidarity and a good nationalist shame at how "Japan" was exploiting these wretched of the earth.

Second was the communications revolution of the 1990s, paralleling the telegraphic revolution of the 1880s, which colossally advanced the speed and depth of global communications, not only for national-state surveillance agencies, but for anyone who was literate and had cheap access to internet cafés. Once again, there was a vast need for translation, since the cross-national networks worked mainly with the "grand languages" of our time, Anglo-American English, French, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Portuguese, and so on. What is interesting here is recognition. Leftists, gays and lesbians, workers, feminists, and ecologists knew they belonged to globality, but this was something new for minorities threatened with extinction, for which the story of Chiapas became a template for armed, militant autonomy within a bleached out nation state.

Third was the challenge of electoral, mediatic democracy and the "regime" of human rights. Even in the time of classical anarchism electoral democracy, rare as it then appeared, was a theoretical and practical problem. British experience, also German and French, had shown that left-wing pressure, expressed through electoral channels, could create, through national laws, changes that a hundred strikes could not easily emulate. Protection of women and children from appalling abuse in mines and factories, safety measures, later insurance, recognition of unions, wage arbitration, and so on. But these changes were embedded in "law", and enforced (or not) by the national state in the form of proliferating bureaucracies: end product, the post-World War II welfare state. "Relax, we'll take care of you", so to speak, emphasizing the obverse pronouns.

The story of "human rights" offers certain parallels. As originally proposed by Amnesty International, classical anarchism would have loved the idea and its original agent: non-state and genuinely international, even if its' HQ was in post-imperial London and its guiding spirit an Irish politician. (Indeed, Kropotkin saw the Red Cross and lifeboat associations as examples of an emergent anarchist-communist tendency). The still small secretariat had exemplary rules, of which the most important were that no HQ researcher could study or care for his or her own country of origin, nor could AI support-groups around the world. The disaster for AI was being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. "Human rights" soon after became the masking slogan for all kinds of Machiavellian military interventions (as well as cynical noninterventions) by the dominant Western powers, led by the United States. Once again, "leave it to us".

Last was the transformation of finance capital itself, under the motto of neo-liberalism. In former days, people in the Caribbean, and Central and South America could be sure that United Fruit's violent successes were American. Whatever its cross-national reach, giant capitalism was still national at its roots: thus it was something which local nationalisms could combat, if they wished, under the flag of anticolonial nationalism's traditional opposition to imperialism.

Meanwhile finance capital, at least in part, moved on. One has to consider an imaginary (but exemplary) United Fruit, whose headquarters are still in Boston, but whose major shareholders are Saudi Arabian princes, Swiss bankers, United Emirates sheikhs, American insurance companies, Japanese conglomerates, and so on, with, say, Indian CEOs. Meantime, the family that built United Fruit vegetates on hedge funds. In fact, Marxist theorists and anarchist activists had long emphasized the transnationality of capital. Nonetheless, perhaps in the grip of old-style anti-(national) imperialist nationalism, they did not imagine the situation we are faced with today.

The beauty of this book is that it shows what classical anarchism, and its progeny, syndicalism, bequeathed to our dyspeptic times. Exemplary courage, theoretical contestation (which lasts longer than theoretical certitude), concerns about how to live freedom, internationalism from experience, not from libraries, a sceptical view of the limits of nationalism, no matter how anti-imperialist, the building of transnational and transregional networks, a commitment to socio-cultural emancipation and grass-roots level organisation, enmity toward "don't worry we will take care of you" welfare bureaucracies, and of course utopias, over the rainbow.

Classical anarchism arose in an era when ultimate progress seemed assured; one could say it was "simply" a matter of the hopeful struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors. Dystopia was off the screen. Today's anarchism lives under the sign of disaster—global warming, extinction of species and languages, and *sauve-qui-peut-ism* of every kind on. Let's hope the tortoise can keep on truckin.'

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Rethinking Anarchism and Syndicalism: The Colonial and Postcolonial Experience, 1870–1940

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This volume examines the history, influence, aspirations, and actions of anarchism and syndicalism in the colonial and postcolonial world from the 1870s until the 1940s. By 'colonial and postcolonial world' we mean those regions of the world under the formal control of external powers, as well as the ex-colonies, that were ostensibly independent social formations, but remained subject to a significant degree to informal imperial power influenced by colonial legacies. The case studies presented in this volume are drawn from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe (with the exception of Ireland).

Each of these case studies analyzes anarchism and syndicalism within a colonial or a postcolonial context. In other words, they situate their analyses within the larger context of late 19th and early 20th century imperialism and globalization, from the 1870s into the 1930s. During this epoch, the first modern globalization, imperialist power increased substantially and coincided with a heretofore unprecedented revolution in communication and transportation technologies, international mass migration, and the emergence of a truly global economy, which in turn spread industrialization across the colonial and postcolonial world.

The regions and countries examined in this volume all had a history of colonialism, including China, dismembered from the late 19th. century. By the early 20th-century, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia and the United States ruled 90 percent of Africa, 57 percent of Asia, a quarter of the Americas, around half of East and Central Europe, and all of Polynesia[1] The great powers also exercised immense indirect control over independent states and other polities in these regions, through the international state system, industrial investments, trade controls, and gunboat diplomacy.[2] Very often imperial capital either displaced or worked closely with the local *bourgeoisie* to maintain a highly unequal internal system of domination. Imperial capital also directed belated industrial change in subject territories in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

In recognition of the globalized character of the world during this period, this volume seeks to understand how anarchism and syndicalism developed as *transnational* movements. To this end it focuses not only national and local contexts but on supranational connections and multidirec-

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[1] J. Marko Bocjun, "The Working Class and the National Question in the Ukraine: 1880–1920", Ph.D., York University, 1985, 132.

[2] Martin van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University

tional flows of the ideas, people, finances, and organisational structures that gave rise to these movements. In this way, it transcends Eurocentric narratives and obviates the frequent tendency to view movements in the colonial and postcolonial world as mere imitations or extensions of European movements. Instead it carefully examines both the universal and particular history of anarchism and syndicalism as reflected in the ideas and culture, social composition, and character of each social movement.

At another level, this collection pays close attention to how anarchists and syndicalists engaged with imperialism, anti-colonial movements and the national question. By the national question, we have in mind both the challenge posed by the role of national and racial identities to working class movements, and the place of demands for national self-determination (and racial equality) in class struggles. The volume seeks, then, to recover the history of anarchist and syndicalist anti-imperialism—as it was manifest in both theory and practice. This is a vital history that has often been ignored, or dismissed, in many texts. The papers in this volume, however, demonstrate unequivocally that anarchism and syndicalism were important currents in anti-imperial, including anti-colonial, struggles in the late 19th and early-to-mid 20th centuries—and were, for most of this period, more important than their Marxist rivals.

The framing of this volume

In order to highlight this experience of imperialism and inequality, we have organised this volume around the framework of a "colonial and postcolonial world", rather than the Cold War concept of a "Third World" (or its successor, the "Global South"). The "Third World" idea routinely excludes the colonial regions within Europe itself, despite obviously instructive parallels with African, Asian and other experiences.

The concept has also always been defined in negative, incoherent, and state-centric terms.[3] It originally signified countries outside the ("socialist") East and the ("capitalist") West—yet it was itself never defined by reference to its own economic system; it included "socialist" China and Cuba alongside overtly "capitalist" countries. It also signified newly independent, and supposedly non-aligned, "nations." Typically, these states defined themselves as "anti-imperialist"—even when their ruling elites continued to collude with the great powers. Finally, it referred to those countries defined as undeveloped or underdeveloped, which implied the need for economic assistance from advanced nations. This last claim always elided the great deal of socio-economic variation within and between these countries, and the reality of substantial, even dramatic, growth and industrialisation, signified by the meteoric rise of Newly-Industrialising Countries (NICs). The notion of a "colonial and postcolonial world" avoids these difficulties, while retaining the stress on the importance of imperialism invoked by the "Third World" idea.

The volume's focus on the period 1870 to 1940 has been chosen both to capture an era of unmatched mass anarchist and syndicalist influence, and the distinctive economic, social and

Press, 1999, 318; M. Lang, "Review Article: Globalisation and Its History", *The Journal of Modern History*, 78, 2006, 913–918.

[3] See, *inter alia*, Ajiz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*, London: Verso, 1992, chapter 3; Mark T. Berger, "After the Third World? history, destiny and the fate of Third Worldism", *Third World Quarterly*, 25: 1, 2004, 9–39; Bill Warren, *Imperialism: pioneer of capitalism*, London: Verso, 1980; Heloise Weber, "Reconstituting the 'Third World'? poverty reduction and territoriality in the global politics of development", *Third World Quarterly*, 25: 1, 2004, 187–206.

political processes that took place in that period. (The closure of this era, and its implications for the anarchists and syndicalists, will be considered in more depth in our closing chapter, "Final Reflections").

The period was one of unprecedented increases in transoceanic and intra-continental migration, global economic integration, and imperial expansion, with the first genuinely global economy emerging by the 1870s.[4] From 1870 to 1914 world trade and output grew steadily, with major powers developing trade to gross domestic product ratios exceeding 35 percent.[5] By all measures, levels of integration matched and typically exceeded those of the late 20th century, and capital moved "quickly and pretty freely across existing national and imperial boundaries".[6]

Jack London, a perceptive witness to these globalizing processes, expressed astonishment at the extraordinary "shrinkage of the planet", which made the "East ... next-door neighbour to the West."[7] Critical to this integration was European technical prowess, which led to the effective partition of the globe between a few great states by 1914.[8] British pre-eminence resulted in an empire incorporating a quarter of the world's land and 800 million people in 1900.[9] The next imperial tier comprised modern powers like Austro-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States. Declining premodern empires, oscillating between modernization and dismemberment filled out the bottom imperial tier: China, Iran, Ottoman Turkey, Portugal, Russia, and Spain.

Such a world posed great opportunities as well as immense challenges for the class-centred anarchists and syndicalists. At one level, the very circuits and centres of imperialism, industrial capitalism, and state formation provided the nexus in which their nemesis, the anarchists and syndicalists, emerged. The first globalisation's unprecedented mobilisations of labour for industry and war spread radicalism and connected the radicals, its cheap communications via steamships, telegraphs and the penny press provided a means of continual contact, and its new industrial centres provided the mass recruits to the syndicalist unions.

The very experience of migration eroded insularity, and demonstrated the common experience of the popular classes the world over, giving the anarchist and syndicalist case for internationalist classstruggle the ring of truth. The routine brutality of states, both colonial and postcolonial, and the grim conditions in fields as well as factories, strengthened the case for radical anti-statism and anti-capitalism. The emerging power of unions and other mass movements, partly a reflection of the era's mass concentrations of urban workers, convinced many that a revolutionary transformation of society was within reach.

Before V. I. Lenin, classical Marxists also lacked an effective approach to struggles in the colonial and postcolonial world (with the key exception of Eastern Europe).[10] Marxists in these re-

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[4] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848–1875*, Abacus, London, 1977, 66 *et seq.*; Lang, 924.

[5] See Paul Hirst, "The Global Economy: myths and realities", *International Affairs*, 73: 3, 1997, 411.

[6] Anderson, 3.

[7] Jack London, 1900, "The Shrinkage of the Planet", from his *Revolution and Other Essays*, 1910, Macmillan, online at http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/London/Writings/Revolution/shrinkage.html, accessed 15 January 1997.

[8] Van Creveld, 317.

[9] Ben Crow, Alan Thomas, Paul Frenz, Tom Hewitt, Sabrina Kassam and Steven Treagust, 1994, *Third World Atlas*, second ed. Buckingham/Milton Keynes: Open University, 31.

[10] See, *inter alia*, Ephraim Nimni, "Great Historical Failure: Marxist theories of nationalism", *Capital and Class*, 25, 1985, 58–82; Sanjay Seth, "Lenin's Reformulation of Marxism: the colonial question as a national question", *History of Political Thought*, XIII: 1, 1992, 99–128; Lucien van der Walt and Michael Schmidt, *Black Flame: the revolutionary class politics of anarchism and syndicalism*, San Francisco, Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009, 92–98.

gions were (where they existed), typically marginal, burdened with the doctrine that the material prerequisites for socialism were lacking, and a fixed commitment to legalistic reformism in contexts where few could vote. The rise of Bolshevism, with its distinctively anti-imperialist and militant posture, radically changed matters. Meanwhile, anarchists and syndicalists had inscribed a record of mass mobilisation across the colonial and postcolonial world, and (see below) of anti-colonial struggle. With Bakunin, these revolutionaries envisaged the "completed and real emancipation of all workers, not only in some but in all nations, 'developed' and 'undeveloped' ",[11] without supposedly necessary intermediate stages.

However, while industrialisation, class formation and class conflict provided the social forces that the anarchists and syndicalists mobilised, and in which their programmatic flexibility and militancy could be activated, the contours of capitalism, the state and the popular classes were also profoundly shaped by imperialism. Thus, at another level, the colonial and postcolonial setting posed peculiar challenges to the revolutionary libertarian socialists: racial, regional, and national divisions amongst the working class and peasantry, as well as the rise of nationalism in the context of anti-imperialist movements.

National and racial identities, as movements like Zionism and Garveyism showed, could flow as easily via migrant and other networks as internationalist ones. Such sectional tendencies undercut internationalism, tended to become sharper as labour market competition intensified, and foreshadowed the world that followed the first modern globalization and the age of empire: the world of nation-states and economic nationalism, rooted in the 1920s and running into the 1990s (discussed further in the concluding chapter).

Anarchism and syndicalism

Although the term "anarchism" is often applied very loosely, this volume uses a narrow definition. The modern anarchist movement arose from the late 1860s in the context of an internationally expanding workers' movement, linked together in the International Workingmen's Association (or First International, 1864–1877).[12] Debates over the question of the state between Karl Marx and Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) were critical in establishing the anarchist current as a distinctive form of socialism. According to Piotr Kropotkin (1842–1921), the most important anarchist theorist after Bakunin, "modern anarchism" emerged "little by little in the Congresses of the great Association and later on among its successors," giving birth to a mass working class and peasant movement.[13]

The core ideas of anarchism, as expressed by Bakunin and Kropotkin, are clear. Fiercely opposed to all forms of social and economic inequality and oppression, anarchism rejected capitalism, the state and hierarchy in general. A revolutionary and libertarian doctrine, anarchism sought the establishment of individual freedom through the creation of a cooperative, democratic, egalitarian and stateless socialist order. This would be established through the direct action of

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[11] Mikhail Bakunin, "Letter to *La Liberté*", in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy: Selected Works by the Activist-Founder of World Anarchism*, London: George Allen and Unwin, [1872] 1971, 284.

[12] David Miller, *Anarchism*, London, Melbourne: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1984, 4, 45; George Woodcock, *Anarchism: a history of libertarian ideas and movements*, new edition with postscript, Penguin, 1975, 136, 170.

[13] Piotr Kropotkin, "Anarchism", in Roger N. Baldwin (ed.), *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets: a collection of writings by Peter Kropotkin*, New York: Dover Publications, [1905] 1970, 295; Piotr Kropotkin, *The Place of Anarchism in Socialistic Evolution*, Cyrmu: Practical Parasite Publications, [1886] 1990, 5–6.

the working class and peasantry, waging an international and internationalist social revolution against capitalism, landlordism and the state.[14]

Syndicalism, on the other hand, refers to a form of revolutionary trade unionism, centred on the view that revolutionary union action can establish a collectivised, worker-managed social order resting on union structures.[15] Syndicalists argued that "the trade union, the syndicate, is the unified organisation of labour and has for its purpose the defence of the interests of the producers within existing society and the preparing for and the practical carrying out of the reconstruction of society after the pattern of Socialism."[16]

Syndicalist ideas emerged from "the non-political tradition of socialism deriving from the libertarian wing of the First International".[17] The "main ideas" of syndicalism can "all be found" in the First International, "and especially in the writings of the Bakuninist or federalist wing".[18] This, as both Marx and Friedrich Engels noted, maintained that workers "must … organise themselves by trades-unions" to "supplant the existing states", with the "general strike" the lever "by which the social revolution is started".[19] Thus, syndicalism was always an integral part of the broad anarchist tradition, although the relationship between anarchism and syndicalism was a complicated one: some anarchists rejected syndicalism, while a substantial section of syndicalists denied (or did not know) that syndicalism was embedded in anarchism.[20]

Taking anarchism and syndicalism seriously

Anarchism and syndicalism, as Benedict Anderson recently reminded readers, constituted an immense "gravitational force" across the planet in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They were, he notes, the dominant element in the self-consciously internationalist radical Left" from the 1870s onwards and "the main vehicle of global opposition to industrial capitalism, autocracy, latifundism, and imperialism" by the turn of the century.[21] Before 1917, Eric Hobsbawm conceded, "the marxist left had in most countries" been "on the fringe of the revolutionary movement, the main body of marxists had been identified with a *de facto* non-revolutionary social democracy", and "the bulk of the revolutionary left was anarcho-syndicalist, or at least much closer to the ideas and the mood of anarcho-syndicalism than to that of classical marxism".[22]

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[14] Van der Walt and Schmidt, 33–81.

[15] Ralph Darlington, *Syndicalism and the Transition to Communism: an international comparative analysis*, Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008, 4–7.

[16] Rudolph Rocker, *Anarcho-syndicalism*, London: Pluto Press, [1938] 1989, 86.

[17] Wayne Thorpe, *'The Workers Themselves': revolutionary syndicalism and international labour 1913–23*, Dordrecht, Boston, London/Amsterdam: Kulwer Academic Publishers/International Institute of Social History, 1989, xiii–xiv.

[18] Louis Levine, *Syndicalism in France*, second ed., New York: Columbia University Press, 1914, 160–161; L. Lorwin, "Syndicalism", in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959, 497.

[19] Karl Marx, "Letter to Paul Lafargue in Paris", In *Marx, Engels, Lenin: anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism*, N.Y. Kolpinsky (ed.), Moscow: Progress Publishers, [19 April 1870] 1972, 46; Friedrich Engels, "The Bakuninists at Work: an account of the Spanish Revolt in the summer of 1873", in N.Y. Kolpinsky (ed.), *Marx, Engels, Lenin: anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, (1873) 1972, 132–133.

[20] Van der Walt and Schmidt, 20–22, 133–144, 149–170.

[21] Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: anarchism and the anti-colonial imagination*, Verso, 2006, 2,54.

[22] Eric Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries*, London: Abacus, 1993, 72–3. The odd spelling of "marxism" appears in Hobsbawm's text.

Yet, in spite of its historical significance, anarchism and syndicalism as an international movement, has "not been well-served by the academy."[23] Too often its history has been "buried under subsequent defeats and political orthodoxies," when not effaced altogether by its rivals on the Left.[24] But the history of the movement is of paramount importance, precisely because it is essential to understand the trajectory of labour, of the left, and of anti-imperialist movements. Furthermore, as Arif Dirlik points out, it is crucial to "recall anarchism, which Leninist Marxism suppressed", for it raises questions about the very meaning of socialism, and the place "democratic ideals for which anarchism … served as a repository".[25]

Taking a global view of anarchist and syndicalist history

The general underestimation of the historical importance of anarchism and syndicalism is rooted in the literature's tendency to focus on the North Atlantic. The standard surveys of the movement's history scarcely take into account the three quarters of humanity that comprised the colonial and postcolonial world. George Woodcock's classic study ignored Asia and Africa, and only looked at one case of a colonial society within Europe itself: the Ukraine. Latin America garnered only three pages, despite the author noting that "until the early 1920s most of the trade unions in Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Argentina were anarcho-syndicalist", and that anarchism had there a "place that cannot be ignored".[26] The work of James Joll reflects the same imbalance.[27] Studies by Daniel Guérin and Roderick Kedward fare no better, offering a brief treatment of the Ukraine.[28] Peter Marshall's more recent study by comparison is balanced. And yet, it allocates only 2 out of 41 chapters, totalling 33 pages out of 706, to the colonial and postcolonial world.[29]

To describe this literature as strictly "Eurocentric" would be misleading. Other than the coverage of the Ukraine, it ignores the colonial regions of Eastern Europe, and its coverage of Western Europe and its offshoots is oddly incomplete, with cases like Ireland omitted.[30] Such a narrow and unrepresentative selection of cases has resulted in a flawed assessment of the history of

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[23] Robert Graham, "[Review essay] Alan Ritter, *Anarchism: a theoretical analysis*/ Michael Taylor, *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty*/David Miller, *Anarchism*", *Telos*, 60, 1985, 197.

[24] David Howell, "Taking Syndicalism Seriously", *Socialist History*, 16, 2000, 30.

[25] Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1991, 3–4, also see 7–8.

[26] Woodcock, *Anarchism: a history of libertarian ideas and movements*, 401–403.

[27] James Joll, *The Anarchists*, London: Methuen and Co., 1964, 175, 184–188, 217, 221–223, 239.

[28] Daniel Guérin, *Anarchism: from theory to practice*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970, 98–101; Roderick Kedward, *The Anarchists: the men who shocked an era*, London/New York: Library of the Twentieth Century, 1971, 81–83.

[29] Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: a history of anarchism*, London: Fontana Press, 1994, 473–475, 504–535.

[30] The Portuguese movement, which dominated that country's labour movement, is also strikingly absent. See Bernhard Bayerlein and Marcel van der Linden, "Revolutionary Syndicalism in Portugal", in Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe (eds.), *Revolutionary Syndicalism: an international perspective*, Otterup/Aldershot: Scolar/Gower Publishing Company, 1990, 160–164. Likewise, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Scotland are routinely ignored. Contra. "Spanish exceptionalism," the case can also be made that anarchism and syndicalism were "adopted extensively as revolutionary theories and practices" and a real "mass movement" in France and the Netherlands (in both, the main labour centres were, for a time, revolutionary syndicalist) and Britain, Germany and above all, Italy (in all three anarchism and syndicalism were a powerful minority tradition with mass support): see van der Walt and Schmidt, pp. 271–295.

anarchism and syndicalism. It posits, for instance, the thesis of Spanish exceptionalism, that is the notion that anarchism in Spain "became a mass movement ... to an extent that it never did elsewhere".[31] Supposedly, Spain was "the only country in the 20th Century where Anarcho-communism and Anarcho-syndicalism were adopted extensively as revolutionary theories and practices".[32] Another problematic conclusion either explicit or implicit in this literature is that "anarchism has rarely taken root in 'Third World', colonial territories", with the possible exception of Korea.[33]

Such claims only make sense if the history of anarchism and syndicalism in most of the world is elided. "[T]he truth is", as Jason Adams astutely notes, "that anarchism has primarily been a movement of the most exploited regions and peoples of the world".[34] In other words, the history of anarchism and syndicalism mainly took place in the "East" and the "South", not in the "North" and the "West".[35] Latin America and Asia, for example, provide many examples of powerful and influential anarchist and syndicalist movements, some of which rivalled that of Spain in importance. Similarly, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe (and Ireland) provide ample evidence of movements operating in colonial situations, as well as in postcolonial contexts.

Argentina, Geoffroy de Laforcade's contribution to this collection, is an instructive case. As de Laforcade demonstrates, Argentina possessed a vibrant and deeply embedded movement by the turn of the century. It is worth noting that Argentine anarchism stretches back to the days of the First International, and that the great Bakunin-Marx debate resonated locally at that time. The precocious development of anarchism in Argentina stemmed from massive proletarian immigration, the formation of transnational activist networks, and the diffusion of a radical press. As in other parts of Latin America these processes combined to produce a movement that would span continents.

Anarchism and syndicalism in Argentina spread rapidly in the burgeoning working-class neighbourhoods and workplaces in Buenos Aires, the nation's capital and chief port. By the turn of the century, Buenos Aires was (with Paterson in the United States) one of the world's two great anarchist publishing centres, and Argentina became the only country to sustain to two anarchist dailies.[36] The Argentine labour movement reflected the influence of syndicalism. Shortly after it was founded in 1901, the Regional Workers' Federation of Argentina (*Federación obrera regional argentina*, FORA) adopted the ideal of "anarchist-communism" at its fifth congress. The FORA would remain Argentina's dominant labour federation for the next decade.

Anarchist influence in Argentina, as de Laforcade shows, extended beyond FORA to include Catholic unions and the rival General Union of Labour (*Unión general de trabajadores*, or UGT). The UGT evolved into a syndicalist Regional Workers' Confederation of Argentina (CORA), which merged with FORA at its ninth congress in 1915. This precipitated a split between a self-

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[31] Joll, 224.

[32] M.M. Breitbart, "Spanish Anarchism: an introductory essay", *Antipode: a radical journal of geography* 10/11: 3/1, 1979, 1. Also see Marshall, 453.

[33] John Crump, "Anarchism and Nationalism in East Asia", *Anarchist Studies*, 4:1, 1996, 45–64, 60–61.

[34] See Jason Adams, *Non-Western Anarchisms: Rethinking the Global Context*, Johannesburg: Zabalaza Books, n.d. [2003], 2–4.

[35] A point previously made in Lucien van der Walt, 2007, "Anarchism and Syndicalism in South Africa, 1904–1921: rethinking the history of labour and the left", Ph.D., University of the Witwatersrand, Ch. 2; van der Walt and Schmidt, Chs. 1, 9.

[36] Yaacov Oved, "The Uniqueness of Anarchism in Argentina", *Estudios Interdisciplinarois de America Latina y el Caribe*, 8: 1, 1997, 63–76, 69.

described "anarchist" wing (identifying with the positions of fifth congress of 1905, the FORA-V) and a "syndicalist" wing aligned to the 1915 merger congress (the ninth, which adopted more pragmatic positions, thus FORA-IX). The two FORAs grew into the 1920s, with around 250,000 members at their height, and no significant rival centres.[37] Analyses that downplay the anarchist influence in Argentina overlook the striking fact that the main split in the union movement was between rivals located *within* a shared, broad, anarchist tradition.[38] In the Argentine context, Marxism—represented by the tiny, moderate local Socialist Party—paled in comparison to the influence of the libertarian movement.[39]

Argentina was by no means an exceptional case of an anarchist "mass movement" in Latin America. In Cuba, anarchism emerged in the 1870s, and "dominated leadership positions in the incipient labour movement" from the 1880s, as Kirk Shaffer notes in his study for this collection. In fact anarchist hegemony persisted for nearly five decades, spanning the Workers' Circle (1885), the Workers' Alliance (formed 1887), the syndicalist Cuban Labour Federation (CTC, 1895), the Labour Federation of Havana (1921), and the National Confederation of Cuban Workers (*Confederación Nacional de Obreros Cubanos*, CNOC, 1925), the latter claiming 200,000 workers.[40] Yet this history has long been obscured, according to Shaffer, by accounts that excised anarchists or misrepresented them as Marxists.[41] Both the Argentine and Cuban cases reflect the larger Latin American pattern: substantial Marxist movements simply did not exist before the mid-1920s,[42] and labour movements were commonly identified with anarchism and syndicalism throughout the rise and fall of the First International and the Labour and Socialist (so-called "Second") International (1889).

Ediline Toledo and Luigi Biondi's chapter on Brazil, likewise demonstrates the "diffuse sympathy" anarchism registered among workers in expanding centres like São Paulo. The syndicalist Confederation of Brazilian Workers (COB, 1906) also dominated the union movement. The COB had between 100,000 and 125,000 members in Rio de Janeiro alone by mid-1919, while the moderate socialists were marginalised and isolated. Anarchists in Mexico, also examined by Shaffer, played a leading role in the unions from the days of the General Congress of Mexican Workers, formed in 1876. The syndicalist federation, the House of the World Worker (*Casa del Obrero Mundial*, COM or *Casa*) formed in 1912, was the main labour centre in the 1910s, with 150,000 members.[43] In 1921, COM was reorganised as the General Confederation of Labour (*Confed-*

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[37] For data, see *inter alia*, Thorpe, 313 note 13 and Ruth Thompson, "Argentine Syndicalism: reformism before revolution", in van der Linden and Thorpe (eds.), 173–174.

[38] For example, Ruth Thompson, "The Limitations of Ideology in the early Argentinean Labour Movement: anarchism in the trade unions, 1890–1920", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 16, 1984, 81–99.

[39] On the party, see *inter alia* G.D.H. Cole, *The Second International, 1889–1914*. London/New York: Macmillan/St Martin's Press, 1956, 825–833; Jeremy Adelman, "Socialism and Democracy in Argentina in the Age of the Second International", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1992, 72: 2, 211–238.

[40] See Frank Fernandez, *Cuban Anarchism: the history of a movement*, Tucson, Arizona: See Sharp Press, 2001, 39–59; Kirk Shaffer, "Purifying the Environment for the Coming New Dawn: anarchism and counter-cultural politics in Cuba, 1898–1925", Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1998.

[41] Shaffer, vii, 2.

[42] Manuel Caballero, *Latin America and the Comintern, 1919–1943*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1986, 8–9; Julio Godio, *El movimiento obrero de américa latina, 1850–1918*, Bogotá: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1978; Ricardo Melgar Bao, *El movimiento obrero latinoamericano: historia de una clase subaltern*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1988.

[43] John Hart, "Revolutionary Syndicalism in Mexico", in van der Linden and Thorpe (eds.), 194, 197.

eración General de Trabajadores, or CGT), which brought in the Mexican section of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW, or Wobblies), peaking at 80,000 in 1928–1929.[44]

Anarchism and syndicalism similarly exercised a preponderant influence over labour movements in Latin America's less developed countries. Steven Hirsch's chapter on Peru demonstrates that anarchists and syndicalists were the dominant force in the labour movement for the first three decades of the 20th century. They organised the principal labour unions in Lima-Callao such as the Workers' Regional Federation of Peru (FORP, 1913, 1919) and the Workers' Federation of Lima (FOL, 1921) and in the provinces. Peru's organised labour movement had contact with FORA and the anarcho-syndicalist dominated union movement in Chile.[45] Syndicalism was also a significant force in Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Ecuador, and visible in Costa Rica, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Panama. In Puerto Rico, for example, as Shaffer shows, anarchists were a vocal dissident minority in the Free Federation of Workers (*Federación Libre de Trabajadores*, or FLT).

African, Asian and European cases

The movement in Africa never attained the influence it had in Latin America, not least because of the late onset of industrialisation and proletarianisation. Yet, as in the Latin American case, the movement emerged in the areas most closely linked to global processes of capital accumulation and imperial penetration: southern Africa, and the Mediterranean perimeter of North Africa. Anthony Gorman's chapter on Egypt and Lucien van der Walt's contribution on South Africa highlight two relatively unknown but highly significant movements, operating at different ends of the diverse continent.

The movement in Egypt emerged along with that elsewhere, and represented in the First International in 1876. It drew much of its early support from the skilled Europeans hired to work on the state's great modernisation projects—most notably the Suez Canal—although it aimed to organise across the barriers of culture and class. Gorman shows that the movement eventually expanded beyond its original immigrant, mainly Italian, nucleus to include Arabic-speaking Egyptians, as well as local Greeks and Jews. This shift was linked to the rise of syndicalist unions and "resistance leagues" in the expanding industrial sector around the turn of the century.

Anarchist activities in South Africa date from the 1880s when the opening of great mines helped launch an industrial revolution. However, the greatest influence of anarchism and syndicalism came after the turn of the century, when Britain had conquered the region and created thereafter the Union of South Africa in 1910. By the end of that decade, a substantial bloc of syndicalist unions had emerged in manufacturing and services—most of these unions were initiated by white radicals, but their base was mainly among people of colour. The most notable was the Industrial Workers of Africa. It was through such structures that pioneering white militants like Scots immigrant Andrew Dunbar (1879–1964) recruited Africans like T.W. Thibedi (1888–1960), and Indians like Bernard L.E. Sigamoney (1888–1963).

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[44] John Hart, *Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class, 1860–1931*, Austin: Texas University Press, 1978, 156; Hart, "Revolutionary Syndicalism in Mexico", 200–201.

[45] See Peter Deshazo, *Urban Workers and Labour Unions in Chile 1902–1927*, Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1983, and Sergio Grez Toso, *Los anarquistas y el movimiento obrero: La alborada de "la idea" en Chile, 1893–1915*, Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2007.

The overall membership of the South African syndicalist unions probably did not exceed 4,000 workers countrywide in the late 1910s, as compared to roughly 47,000 in the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF, 1914), and 6,000 in the Cape Federation of Labour (1913). It must, however, be noted that these syndicalist unions were some of the very first unions among people of colour, who were largely excluded from the two big federations.

In both African cases, the anarchists and syndicalists did not actually establish union federations linking the unions they led or initiated. They played a role—a minority one—in the leadership of more orthodox union centres that emerged from the 1910s: the General Confederation of Labour (*Confédération Générale du Travail*, CGT, or *Ittihad al-niqabat al-ʿam*) formed in Egypt in 1921, and the Cape Federation of Labour and the SAIF, respectively.

In Central Asia, anarchists could be found across the (ex-)Russian and Ottoman territories, with adherents amongst Arabs, Turks and national minorities.[46] In South Asia, anarchism influenced Bengali extremists of the early 1900s, the Ghadar Party in the 1910s and the Hindustan Republican Socialist Association in the 1920s.[47] It was, however, in East Asia that anarchism and syndicalism were most prominent.

In East Asia, Dirlik notes, anarchism became the "the dominant ideology" during the first two decades of the 20th century. Pioneering union efforts in the Philippines were followed by more durable and sophisticated movements not just in imperial Japan, but in China, Korea and Vietnam,[48] as well as Taiwan and British Malaya (now Malaysia). Dirlik's chapter provides a partial overview of the East Asian movement, where immersion "in the burgeoning labour movement" was often an important focus. In China the anarchists played a leading role in unions in the major urban centres.[49] Anarchists founded the first modern unions, with around forty anarchist-led unions in the Canton area alone by 1921, and "anarchist domination" of the unions in Canton and Hunan into the mid-1920s.[50]

While the East Asian movement tended to develop late by European standards, its peak—the late 1910s into the early 1930s—overlapped quite closely with other movements in the colonial and postcolonial world. Dongyoun Hwang's chapter on Korea shows the movement belatedly emerged in the 1920s, and its key period spanned the 1920s and 1930s. Despite concerted efforts to establish anarchist organisations in Korea, Japanese colonial police thwarted these efforts by repeated "prompt and brutal suppression". Korean anarchists had more success in the border areas and in China and Japan. Syndicalism was influential—although repression in Korea meant that the most successful Korean syndicalist initiatives occurred among Korean workers in Japan.

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[46] See Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, "Levantine Trajectories: the formulation and dissemination of radical ideas in and between Beirut, Cairo and Alexandria, 1860–1914", Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2003; Max Nettlau, *A Short History of Anarchism*, London: Freedom Press, (1934) 1996, ch. 16; Mece Tunçay and Erik Jan Zürcher (eds.), *Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1923*, London, New York/Amsterdam: British Academic Press imprint of I.B. Tauris Publishers/International Institute of Social History, 1994.

[47] On India/Pakistan, see Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: ideology, organization and strategy*, Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 1983, esp. ch. 2, and Jitendra Nath Sengal, *Bhagat Singh: a biography*, Gurgaon: Hope India Publications, [1931] 2006, esp. ch. 11.

[48] On Vietnam, see Hue-Tam Ho Tai, *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992, esp. ch. 2. On the Philippines, see Anderson.

[49] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 15, 27, 128, 170, 290; Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, 214–215

[50] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 15, 27, 170; Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, 214–215.

As the preceding discussion of the colonial and postcolonial world suggests, the "great age of the anarchists" certainly did not come to a close in 1914.[51] The studies in this volume point to a different chronology.

Like the famed National Confederation of Labour in Spain (*Confederación nacional del trabajo*, or CNT, 1910), the FORAs, FORP, CNOC, and COM (and its successor the Mexican CGT), along with Chinese, Korean, Egyptian, and South African syndicalist organisations, grew rapidly throughout the 1910s, into the 1920s, and often, beyond.[52] This trajectory is also evident in the story of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU), linked to the Irish Trade Union Congress, which is discussed in Emmet O'Connor's contribution on Ireland. Anarchism emerged in Ireland as early as 1885.[53] Three decades later, deeply influenced by syndicalism, the ITGWU exploded from 20,000 in 1913 to 120,000 by 1920.

Provincialising Spanish anarchism

By adopting a broader, global scope of comparison and eschewing a traditional focus on the West, then, this volume challenges the validity of the Spanish exceptionalism thesis. Anarchist and syndicalist influence among the working-classes and union movements in Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba, was arguably as significant, if not more so, than in Spain. The CNT at its zenith represented approximately half of Spain's union movement, whereas the FORAs, CTC, CNOC, COB and FORP comprised a decisive and overwhelming majority of the organised labour force in their respective countries.[54]

From a colonial and postcolonial world perspective, then, Spain's movement is only one important link in a chain of mass anarchist and syndicalist movements. Barcelona, the "fiery rose" of Spanish anarchism, likewise, must be seen as only one among many "important red-and-black cities".[55] Anarchism and syndicalism found fertile soil for its "fiery roses" to blossom as powerful movements in urban centres across the globe, including Buenos Aires, Canton, GulyaiPolye, Havana, Hunan, Lima, Lisbon, Montevideo, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Santiago; there were also budding movements in centres like Alexandria, Cape Town, Dublin, Johannesburg, and Beirut.

The class character of anarchism and syndicalism

Anarchism has long been stereotyped as a movement based on *petty bourgeois* artisans and peasants, who, threatened by the modernizing forces of industry and mechanization hanker for a pre-modern past.[56] This interpretation has been propounded by Marxist activists and schol-

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[51] *Contra.* Kedward, 5.

[52] Van der Walt and Schmidt, 164–169.

[53] Fintan Lane, "The Emergence of Modern Irish Socialism 1885–1887", in *Red and Black Revolution: a magazine of libertarian communism*, 3, 1997, 20–21.

[54] Van der Walt and Schmidt, 165, 274–275.

[55] Van der Walt and Schmidt, 291.

[56] See, for example, G.M. Stekloff, *History of the First International*, revised ed., London: Martin Lawrence, 1928, 312; E. Yaroslavsky, *History of Anarchism in Russia*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, [? 1937], 26, 28, 41, 68–69; Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: studies in archaic forms of social movement in the 19th and 20th centuries*, third ed., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971; Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries*; Kedward, 24–26; also see Woodcock, 444–445.

ars. Not surprisingly, they routinely portray anarchists as "reactionary" petty bourgeois types or occasionally as pre-political "lumpenproletarian" socialists.[57] Even syndicalists are often are characterised as "workers in small industry and artisan crafts", isolated from "medium and large-scale industry".[58] Such claims naturally conduce to the simple conclusion that anarchism and syndicalism are anti-modern movements. For some, this reinforces the teleological proposition that the Marxists alone "always and everywhere represent the interest" of "the proletariat" which "alone is a really revolutionary class".[59]

Under close empirical analysis, the thesis of the petit bourgeois class composition of anarchism and syndicalism assertion is difficult to sustain. The largest organisations in the broad anarchist tradition were the syndicalist unions. Studies drawn largely from the Western experience have demonstrated that the majority of workers in the syndicalist unions were unmistakably proletarian. These proletarians were not limited to casual and seasonal labourers, like construction workers, dockers, gas workers, and farm labourers; factory workers in light and heavy industries, miners, and railway workers also constituted core elements of the syndicalist unions.[60]

The studies in this collection generally bear out the proletarian social base of anarchism and syndicalism. O'Connor's chapter shows that that syndicalism had a particular resonance among construction, metallurgical, mine, and transport workers, while at its height in 1920, half its membership were farm workers.[61] In Peru, Hirsch points out that anarchism and syndicalism drew support largely from semi-skilled factory, port, and railway workers.[62] Mexican syndicalism, likewise, had strong support from skilled workers in small plants, as well as a mass base among factory workers, notably in textiles, and miners.[63] In the case of Brazil, Toledo and Biondi's study demonstrates that anarchism and syndicalism garnered support from factory as well as artisanal labour in São Paulo.[64] In Argentina, de Laforcade shows that anarchist and syndicalist unions set down deep roots in the urban working class, and in the expanding "ports to an extent never equalled in any other sector of the economy".

The African contributions to this volume also corroborate this claim. In Egypt, Gorman shows, the majority of anarchists were initially skilled manual workers, but by the end of the 19th century the movement shifted towards the "new working class, particularly cigarette workers, printers and the employees of the new public utilities, such as the tramways". In South Africa, van der

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[57] Stekloff, 312; also see Nikolai Bukharin, *The ABC of Communism.* Michigan/ Toronto: University of Michigan Press/Ambassador Books, [1922] 1966, 77–78; Yaroslavsky, 26, 28, 41, 68–69.

[58] Astrogilda Pereira, quoted in E.A. Gordon, "Anarchism in Brazil: theory and practice, 1890–1920", Ph.D., Tulane University, 1978, 33; Maurice Zeitlin, *Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class*, New York: Harper & Row, 1970, 160–163.

[59] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto.* Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, [1848] 1954, 34, 39–40.

[60] Larry Peterson, "The One Big Union in International Perspective: revolutionary industrial unionism, 1900–1925", in J.E. Cronin and C. Sirianni (eds.), *Work, Community and Power: the experience of labour in Europe and America*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983, 68–75; Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe, 1990, "The Rise and Fall of Revolutionary Syndicalism", in van der Linden and Thorpe (eds.), 7–12; van der Walt and Schmidt, ch. 9.

[61] This is in line with previous research, such as Joseph White, 1990, "Syndicalism in a Mature Industrial Setting: the case of Britain", in van der Linden and Thorpe (eds.), 105–108.

[62] Steven J. Hirsch, "The Anarcho-Syndicalist Roots of a Multi-Class Alliance: organised labour and the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1900–1933", Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1997, 13, 15, 27, 30, 34, 47, 59, 169.

[63] Hart, "Revolutionary Syndicalism in Mexico", 192–198.

[64] The claim that anarchism and syndicalism represented atavistic craft workers in Brazil has long detracted from due recognition of their impact in the factories: see Sheldon Leslie Maram, "Anarchists, Immigrants and the Brazilian Labour Movement, 1890–1920", Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1972, 98–100.

Walt notes, leading activists included blacksmiths, carpenters and teachers, but the popular membership of syndicalist unions was primarily drawn from semi-skilled and unskilled workers in manufacturing and services, like dockers, tramway workers, clothing workers, and employees in food and tobacco processing.

In short, this volume documents the industrial and service sector composition of anarchism and syndicalism. In the colonial and postcolonial world, it was precisely the sectors most closely associated with capitalist globalisation and state modernisation that furnished the bulk of anarchist and syndicalist activists. Most of the cases also indicate a concerted attempt to develop support among rural wage workers: this was particularly true in Argentina, Cuba, Ireland, Peru, and Puerto Rico.

It is also important to note that peasant farmers were sometimes targeted for recruitment and mobilization. In China, anarchists were the first Leftist radicals to seriously consider the peasantry as a revolutionary force and to spearhead "the transmission of the revolutionary movement to rural areas".48 Dirlik points out Chinese anarchists shared with Kropotkin a vision of the world, in which industry and agriculture, town and country, would be harmoniously integrated.

Efforts to organise the Mexican peasantry along anarchist and syndicalist lines date back to the late 1860s.[65] Subsequently, as Shaffer shows, the anarchist Mexican Liberal Party (PLM) of Flores Magón organised armed revolts in Baja California (Mexico, 1911), and in Texas (United States, 1915), which drew heavily on peasant support. Building alliances between urban workers and rural peasants was never easy. Deep divisions existed between Zapatista peasants and COM's urban-industrial worker base during the course of the Mexican Revolution. In Peru, ethnic and regional tensions between indigenous peasants in the countryside and *mestizo* workers in urban areas complicated anarchist attempts to forge durable solidarity networks.

Successful peasant organisation and mobilization by anarchists, clearly demonstrated the peasants' revolutionary potential. The most dramatic example comes from colonial Europe in the form of the *Makhnovischna* (or Makhno movement) anarchist movement which developed in the Ukraine from 1917—the subject of Aleksandr Shubin's contribution. Anarchist currents were influential in the Ukraine from the 1880s, with Bakunin's views of particular importance.[66]

The movement revived in the early 20th century. The eponymous Nestor Ivanovich Makhno (1889–1934) came from a poor peasant family, and was jailed in 1908 for anarchist activities. Working in wage labour from his adolescence, he played an important role in the unions of Gulyai-Polye, a small manufacturing town, after his release in 1917.[67]

However, it was from the peasantry of the Ukraine—the richest farming region in the Russian Empire, producing around 20 percent of the world's wheat by 1914—that the movement drew its big battalions.[68] From 1917 the anarchists in the Ukraine organised the peasants to expropriate land, and then form a largely peasant militia, the Revolutionary Insurgent Army of the Ukraine,

[65] Hart, *Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class, 1860–1931*, 29, 32–42, 70–71, 47, 54, 81–82.

[66] See Serge Cipko, "Mikhail Bakunin and the National Question", *The Raven*, 3: 1, 1990, 3–14; J.P. Himka, "Young Radicals and Independent Statehood: the idea of a Ukrainian nation-state, 1890–1895", *Slavic Review*, 41: 2, 1982, 219–221, 223–224, 227–229.

[67] Alexandre Skirda, *Nestor Makhno: Anarchy's Cossack: the struggle for free soviets in the Ukraine 1917–1921*, Edinburgh, San Francisco: AK Press, (1982) 2003, 35–36.

[68] Colin M. Darch, "The Makhnovischna, 1917–1921: ideology, nationalism, and peasant insurgency in early twentieth century Ukraine", Ph.D., University of Bradford, 1994, 136, 138–139.

the following year. As the *Makhnovischna* seized control of large sections of West Bank Ukraine, they redistributed land and promoted cooperatives and a system of councils.

The emphasis on peasant organisation and self-defence likewise can be seen in the Korean case. Although Korean anarchists were active in Seoul, Shanghai and Tokyo, Hwang points out, they joined Chinese and Japanese anarchists in the Movement for Rural Self-Defence Communities in Fujian Province in the 1920s. As a result, peasant militias were formed to fight off bandit and Communist attacks. In Kirin province in Manchuria, anarchist veteran Ha Ki Rak (1912– 1997) recorded, the anarchist general Kim Jao-jin (of the Korean Independence Army, which controlled the area) sponsored the "Korean People's Association in Manchuria". An anarchist aligned body it ran education, services, military defence and cooperatives from 1929 to 1932 in an area with an estimated population of two million.[69] Ha characterised Kim as the "Korean Makhno", and suggested this "Kirin Revolution" compared favourably to the *Makhnovischna* revolution in the Ukraine from 1918 to 1921.

Anarchism, syndicalism, and transnational networks

A salient feature of anarchism and syndicalism was the pivotal importance of transnational networks in constituting the movement. Comprised of formal and informal structures, these networks facilitated doctrinal diffusion, financial flows, transmission of information and symbolic practices, and acts of solidarity. Anarchist networks, as a key recent study has shown, were often built upon migratory diasporas and were reinforced by the movement's press and the travels of major activists.[70] It might be added that were also connected by linked shared campaigns (such as the international protests against the execution of anarchist educator Francesco Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1859–1909), and common rituals like May Day (originating as a commemoration of American anarchists executed in 1887 after the struggle for the eighthour day).

The papers in this collection, therefore, seek to balance a national case study approach with careful attention to the role transnational processes played in the development of anarchism and syndicalism. Shaffer's study illustrates the merits of paying close attention to the transnational dimension. He delineates two different anarchist and syndicalist networks encompassing the Caribbean, Mexico and southern US. One network linked Cuba, Panama, Puerto Rico, and the US. Its hub was in Havana from whence came *¡Tierra!* ('Land!'), the anarchist weekly. *¡Tierra!* would be instrumental in the coordination of a cirum-Caribbean anarchist movement. The other, overlapping network discussed by Shaffer connected Mexico and the US Southwest. Here, the PLM paper *Regeneración* and the cross-border organising of the IWW played central roles. Political exile and economic migration also contributed to reinforcing the networks as radicals and workers circulated widely between jobs and temporary sanctuaries throughout the Caribbean, the US and Mexico.

The diffusion of anarchism in East Asia likewise was fuelled by transnational and translocal connections. Dirlik stresses the importance of translocal ties in linking revolutionaries across

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[69] See Ha Ki Rak, *A History of Korean Anarchist Movement [sic].* Taegu: Anarchist Publishing Committee, 1986, 69–96.

[70] Davide Turcato, "Italian Anarchism as a Transnational Movement, 1885–1915", *International Review of Social History*, 52: 3, 2007, 412–416; For an analysis of the impact of mass immigration, itinerant anarchist militants, and the transnational anarchist press on the development of Argentine anarchism, see, José C. Moya, *Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires, 1850–1930*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1998, especially 307–317.

Asia (and also beyond Asia), with the networks not only diffusing ideas but also reshaping them locally. Imperial Paris was important to East Asian anarchism, but imperial Tokyo was undoubtedly the central "location for radical education and activity that is quite reminiscent of the role played by London for radicals in Europe", drawing in students and radicals from across Asia, spreading nationalism, anarchism and later Marxism. Dirlik stresses in his chapter that the anarchism encountered by Chinese radicals "in the early part of the 20th century was already a product of global circulation, having spilled out of Europe into locations across Asia, Africa and Latin America". It was adapted to local circumstances and demands (as Toledo and Biondi also note of Brazil, and as Shaffer notes of Cuba) but if "native experiences shaped the translation of anarchism into local idiom, the very act of translation transformed the local idiom as well".

As indicated earlier, anarchism and syndicalism emerged within the circuits and centres of imperialism, industrial capitalism, and state formation, including its labour mobilisations and communications revolution. As concrete examples, the opening of the Suez (1869) and Panama (1914) canals is very much part of the story of anarchism: the workforce recruited to the former helped launch Egyptian anarchism, as Gorman suggests, and the workforce recruited to the latter spread the movement to the isthmus of the Americas, as Shaffer notes. In Egypt, this contributed to the development of a network linking Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunis and Turkey, as well as the major centres in Europe and the Americas, "based on personal recommendation and shared ideological vision".

Likewise, as van der Walt argues, anarchism and syndicalism came to South Africa in the wake of an industrial revolution financed by European capitalists and hastened by British imperial expansion. British-born immigrants—workers and soldiers—played a key role in fostering the movement. The first organised activity dated to 1881, in Port Elizabeth. Links between South Africa and Britain, especially Scotland—via the radical press, migration, and visits—networked militants in imperial Europe and colonial Africa, with Scotch radicals from the Clydeside factories decisive in introducing the IWW, including the variant associated with Daniel De Leon (1852–1914). Thus, the IWW, formed in Chicago with influences from Paris, spread via Detroit into Glasgow, and from there into Cape Town, Durban, Kimberley, Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Language and ethnic diasporas clearly played an important role in such transnational networks. This can also be seen among the Chinese anarchists who were active in Cuba, France, the United States, Japan, and British Malaya.[71] Language and a shared press—notably papers like *Pingdeng* ("Equality")—helped establish the transnational Chinese anarchist network and foster a shared class struggle.[72] It was the Chinese anarchists who launched the Malaysian trade unions.[73] The Italians played a similar role. Indeed, a great deal of the history of Italian anarchism took place outside of Italy. Biondi and Toledo point out there were more Italian-language anarchist periodicals in Brazil than Portuguese ones.

While this might seem a recipe for ethnic insularity, the medium should not be confused with the message. The Italian anarchists were certainly connected by common origins, language and culture but were defined by their anti-nationalist and "cosmopolitan global movement opposed

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[71] On Cuba, see Jane Mee Wong, "*Pingshe*: retrieving an Asian American anarchist tradition", *Amerasia Journal*, 34: 1, 2008, 143, 148–149; On Malaya, see C.F. Yong, "Origins and Development of the Malayan Communist Movement, 1919–1930", *Modern Asian Studies*, 25: 4, 1991, 625–648.

[72] For instance, see Wong, 135–139.

[73] Datuk Khoo Kay Kim and Ranjit Singh Malhl, "Malaysia: Chinese anarchists started trade unions", *The Sunday Star*, 12 September 1993.

to all borders".[74] In the Western Hemisphere anarchist networks, as Shaffer suggests, arose from "language facilitated network connections" amongst a range of Spanish-speaking nationalities across a range of countries and communities.

Hwang's work makes a similar point, showing that Korean anarchism cannot be reduced to anarchism within Korea proper. It was a regional movement active across East Asia, linked by a common press and it operated in a cosmopolitan context.[75] Thus, Korean anarchism first emerged in China and Japan, and was always located in a cosmopolitan milieu characterised by transnational linkages and activities. There were many examples of joint Chinese, Japanese and Korean anarchist cooperation in the 1920s. Notable initiatives included cooperation in the radical Lida College in China, peasant organising in Fujian Province, and the founding in 1927, in Nanjing, of the Eastern Anarchist League (*Mujeongbu juui dongbang yeonmaeng*) by Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese delegates.

The concept of "informal internationalism" helps explain the simultaneous emergence of anarchism in Europe, Latin America and North Africa from the late 1860s and 1870s previously alluded to in this introduction.[76] The First International provided the womb in which the anarchist movement emerged, but the formal meetings of the International, its press, and its debates were located within the body of a dynamic global working class and peasant network. Anarchism had an organised presence in Argentina, Cuba, Egypt and Mexico from the 1870s, followed by Ireland, South Africa and Ukraine in the 1880s. The first anarchist-led, syndicalist, unions outside of Spain (the Spanish Regional Workers' Federation, 1870) and the USA (the Central Labour Union, 1884) were Mexico's General Congress of Mexican Workers (1876) and Cuba's Workers' Circle (1887). These were the immediate ancestors of the better known syndicalist unions that emerged globally from the 1890s onwards.[77]

To put it another way, anarchism was not a West European doctrine that diffused outwards, perfectly formed, to a passive "periphery".[78] Rather, the movement *emerged simultaneously and transnationally*, created by interlinked activists on three continents—a pattern of interconnection, exchange and sharing, rooted in "informal internationalism," which would persist into the 1940s and beyond.

Nor were these linkages only informal. Besides the First International, and the Eastern Anarchist League, we can adduce transnational bodies like the Anti-Authoritarian International (or "Black International", 1881), of which the American Central Labour Union, and the Mexican General Congress of Mexican Workers, were the largest affiliates, and the syndicalist International Workers Association (1922), with its powerful Latin American wing, the American Continental Workers' Association (*Asociación Continental Americana de Trabajadores*, ACAT, 1929).

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[74] Turcato, 416; See also Donna R. Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli (eds.), *Italian Workers of the World: Labour Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001, chs. 3, 5, 7.

[75] For more on this, see also Dongyoun Hwang, "Beyond Independence: the Korean anarchist press in China and Japan in the 1920s and 1930s", *Asian Studies Review*, 31: 1, 2007, 3–23.

[76] Constance Bantman points to this process when she notes that many of the key themes in "French" syndicalism were derived from informal international collaborations from the First International onwards, and inspired by developments in US, Australian and British unions: Constance Bantman, "Internationalism without an International? Cross-channel anarchist networks, 1880–1914", *Revue Belge de Philologie et D'Histoire*, 84: 4, 2006, 961–981, 974–979.

[77] van der Walt and Schmidt, 16, 153–158.

[78] We refer here to the "European diffusion" model of history, as noted in Barbara Weinstein, "History without a Cause? Grand narratives, world history, and the postcolonial dilemma", *International Review of Social History*, 50: 1, 71–93.

To speak of discrete "Northern" and "Southern" anarchist and syndicalist movements, then, would be misleading and inaccurate. The networks discussed in this section straddled the colonial, postcolonial, and imperial countries, linking for example, radicals in Mexico and the US, in Cuba and Spain, South Africa and Britain, and Korea and Japan. The movement, in short, was not just internationalist in principle and imagination, but global in its creation, organisation, reach and aspirations. At the same time, it did not deny the existence of nationality but rather it sought to reconcile nationality with internationalism.

Race, nation and imperialism

The question of how anarchism and syndicalism approached issues of nationality, race, and imperial power is one that has received surprisingly little attention in the literature. Yet the anarchist and syndicalist movements were ascendant in a period marked by the first modern globalization and empire-building. The way in which the anarchist and syndicalist movement engaged with divisions within the international working class and peasantry, and the impact of imperial power on different parts of the globe, in this particular context, remains strikingly under-examined in the existing literature.

The standard texts on anarchism and syndicalism pay scant attention to how these confronted imperialism and the national question, or how their history was shaped by the inescapable presence of empires. The works of Joll, Woodcock, and Marshall, for example, studiously avoid an analysis of how anarchists and syndicalists grappled with racial and national divisions in the popular classes.

The issue of how anarchism and syndicalism engaged with antiimperialist struggles is also given short shrift in these texts. Conventional treatments, focussed on Spanish anarchism, tend to gloss over not only regional and ethnic divisions within the CNT, but the Spanish empire itself. Their examinations of the *Makhnovischna* scarcely note that the movement was operating in a territory long subject to Poland and Russia (and briefly, Germany), emerged in the context of the massive wave of independence struggles then sweeping Central and Eastern Europe, and competed (and sometimes cooperated) with Ukrainian nationalists.[79] Daniel Guérin's work at least takes up the issue of when and why anarchist luminary Bakunin supported independence struggles, but neglects to carry this through into his discussion of the *Makhnovischna*.[80] Marshall's analysis of Asian and Latin American movements correctly notes their anti-imperialism, but elides what this entailed.[81]

It is understandable, then, that there is a fairly widespread notion that historical anarchism and syndicalism were conspicuously absent from anti-imperialist struggles—a view found even among some contemporary self-described anarchists. For some, this supposed absence is evidence of anarchism's commendable ethical universalism, and its rejection of arbitrary social divisions.[82] For others, by contrast, it purportedly demonstrates a deplorable Eurocentrism that

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[79] For instance, Joll, 184–188.
[80] Guérin, 67–69, 98–101.
[81] Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: a history of anarchism*, 561–598.
[82] Murray Bookchin argued that historical anarchism rejected nationalism, regionalism and 'nationality' as inherently authoritarian and parochial, advising contemporaries to look askance at national liberation struggles: Murray Bookchin, "Nationalism and the National Question", *Society and Nature*, 2: 2, 1994, 8–36.

apparently ensured anarchism had "almost nothing to do with the anti-colonial struggles that defined revolutionary politics in this century".[83]

However, both of these academic and polemical literatures are deeply flawed: they ignore the depth and breadth of anarchist and syndicalist anti-imperialism. There is a small but valuable scholarly corpus that rather more effectively addresses the relationship between anarchism and syndicalism, on the one hand, and the national question, on the other although it is schematic and often Eurocentric.[84]

In general, it emphasizes that Bakunin and Kropotkin subscribed to the principle of "respect for humanity" based on "the recognition of human right and human dignity in every man, of whatever race" or "colour".[85] For Bakunin anarchism implied a "multi-national, multiracial" and "world-wide" working people's organisation dedicated to a class-based libertarian revolution.[86] A recent study on anarchism in Western Europe also found that from "its very inception" it rejected xenophobia in favour of international unity, anti-militarism and anticolonialism.[87] With respect to "Syndicalist movements", Marcel van der Linden observed that they "probably belonged to those parts of the international labour movement which were the least sensitive to racism".[88]

The few extant analyses of anarchist and syndicalist engagements with racial and national divisions in the colonial and postcolonial world also offer important insights.[89] In general, they underscore an active opposition to prejudice and oppression. In late 19th century Cuba, for example, the anarchist Workers' Circle was the "first working-class association … that was explicitly antiracist and antinationalist", and organised across racial lines, "fostering class consciousness and helping to eradicate the cleavages of race and ethnicity".[90] Its successor, the Workers' Alliance, "eroded racial barriers as no union had done before in Cuba", and sought to combat racial

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[83] Christopher Day, *The Historical Failure of Anarchism: implications for the future of the revolutionary project*, Chicago: Kasama Essays for Discussion, [1996] 2009, 5; also see Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, *Anarchism and the Black Revolution and Other Essays*, Philadelphia: Monkeywrench Press and the Worker Self-Education Foundation of the Industrial Workers of the World, 1994, 3–6, 21, 23 (but cf. 123).

[84] This literature dealing specifically with this issue is very limited and often schematic (certainly by contrast with the extensive work on Marxism and the national question), and almost entirely focused on western Europe: key works include Jean Caroline Cahm, "Bakunin", in Eric Cahm and Vladimir Claude Fišera (eds.), *Socialism and Nationalism*, Nottingham: Spokesman, 1978; Jean Caroline Cahm, "Kropotkin and the Anarchist Movement", in Cahm and Fišera (eds.); Michael Forman, *Nationalism and the International Labour Movement: the idea of the nation in socialist and anarchist theory*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998; M. Grauer, "Anarcho-Nationalism: anarchist attitudes towards Jewish nationalism and Zionism", *Modern Judaism*, 14: 1, 1994, 1–19; Rob Knowles, "Anarchist Notions of Nationalism and Patriotism", in edited by J. Zizek and C. Leitz (eds), *Writing Europe's Pasts: proceedings of the thirteenth biennial conference of the Australasian Association for European History*, Auckland, New Zealand: Australian Humanities Press, Unley, 2001; Carl Levy, 2004, "Anarchism, Internationalism and Nationalism in Europe, 1860–1939", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 50: 3, 330–342. Also see Cipko, 3–14. For a more global approach, see van der Walt and Schmidt, ch. 10.

[85] Mikhail Bakunin, "Federalism, Socialism, Anti-Theologism", in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy: Selected Works by the Activist-Founder of World Anarchism*, London: George Allen and Unwin, [1867] 1971, 147.

[86] Bakunin, "The Programme of the International Brotherhood", in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy: Selected Works by the Activist-Founder of World Anarchism*, London: George Allen and Unwin, [1872] 1971, 174, emphasis in the original; Mikhail Bakunin, *Statism and Anarchy*: Cambridge University Press, (1873) 1990, 45.

[87] Bantman, 961, 964.

[88] Marcel van der Linden, "Second Thoughts on Revolutionary Syndicalism", key-note address at *Syndicalism: Swedish and International Historical Experiences*, Stockholm University, Sweden, March 13–14, 1998, 15

[89] For a summary, see van der Walt and Schmidt, ch. 10.

[90] Joan Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba in the Second Half of the Nineteenth-Century", Ph.D., State University of New York, 1994, 8, 302–303.

discrimination by employers and the state.[91] In Brazil, labour activists "inspired by the egalitarian doctrines of socialism, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism" struggled to forge an interracial labour movement, uniting native-born and immigrant workers, and black and white, with explicit appeals to Afro-Brazilians.[92]

Similarly, anarchists and syndicalists in Peru explicitly rejected doctrines of inherent racial inequality, championed the cause of indigenous emancipation, and developed a significant presence among Indian peasants and mine workers.[93] Nevertheless, positivist philosophical influences also shaped the movement's attitudes toward native Peruvians inasmuch as it tended to see their Westernisation as progressive.[94] In Mexico the movement struggled against the "wage disparity between Mexicans and North Americans", and "discriminatory practices by foreign managers".[95] The PLM also adopted an anti-racist posture. It claimed that racial and national prejudices were "managed by the capitalists and tyrants" to make "impossible the union of all nations who are separately fighting to free themselves from Capital".[96]

Supplementing the abovementioned literature, the papers in this volume shed additional light on the movement's relationship to the national question, demonstrating that a radical and subversive antiracialism and internationalism were hallmarks of the movement. De Laforcade demonstrates that in Argentina there was a "fierce anarchistinspired opposition to nativist and ethnically divisive projections of working-class identity". Shaffer's contribution underscores anarchist efforts to surmount racial and national divisions in the working class in Cuba, Mexico and Panama had varying degrees of success. Toledo and Biondi's work on Brazil shows that exclusive cross-class ethnic associations co-existed alongside integrated anarchist and syndicalist class-based organisations. The immigrant workers—mostly Italian and Spanish—were divided by country, even province, of origin, as well as by language, and language also posed problems for their relations with the (Portuguese-speaking) Brazilian workers. Hirsch's study documents the Peruvian movement's efforts to organise and empower indigenous peasants and to forge a working-class alliance that transcended ethnic and regional divisions.

In the Ukraine, the largely ethnic Ukrainian *Makhnovischna* distinguished themselves from the nationalists in their violent opposition to the murderous anti-Semitism sweeping the collapsing Russian empire. Besides arming Jewish communities, and forming a Jewish battalion in the Revolutionary Insurgent Army, Shubin notes, the movement executed members found to have

[91] Joan Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba", 366, 367, 381, 393–4; Joan Casanovas, 1995, "Slavery, the Labour Movement and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850–1890", *International Review of Social History*, 40:3, 381–382.

[92] George Reid Andrews, "Black and White Workers: São Paulo, Brazil, 1888–1928", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 68: 3, 1988, 497–500, 511.

[93] Steven Hirsch, "Anarchist Trails in the Andes: Transnational Influences and Counter-Hegemonic Practices in Peru's Southern Highlands, 1905–1928." Paper presented at the European Social Science History Conference, Ghent, Belgium, 13–16 April 2010.

[94] On anarchism and its relationship to the Indian question in Peru, see, *inter alia*, Piedad Pareja, "El anarquismo en el perú y el problema indígena", *Revista Proceso*, 6, 1977, 109–119; Gerardo Leibner, "*La Protesta* y la andinización del anarquismo en el Perú, 1912–1915", *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y el Caribe*, 5:1, 1994, 83–102; Wilfredo Kapsoli, *Ayllus del Sol: Anarquismo y Utopia Andina*, Lima: TAREA, 1984. On the movement's problematic relationship with Asian immigrants see Peter Blanchard, *The Origins of the Peruvian Labour Movement, 1883–1919*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982, 123–125, 165–166.

[95] Norman Caulfield, "Wobblies and Mexican Workers in Petroleum, 1905–1924", *International Review of Social History*, 40:1, 1995, 52, 54, 56, 64–5, 67–8, 70–2.

[96] Quoted in David Poole, "The Anarchists in the Mexican Revolution part 2: Praxedis G. Geurerro 1882–1910", *The Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review*, 4, 1978, 71.

been involved in pogroms; it also acted against those who attacked German settlers. In Ireland, the syndicalists faced the challenge of organising in industrialised Ulster, where as O'Connor notes, the Catholic minority formed a subaltern caste. The ITGWU sought to overcome the sectarian divide with class solidarity, and had some success in opposing Protestant Unionism, while supporting Irish republicanism. It was, however, eventually forced to accept the division of the country set out by the 1921 Anglo-Irish peace treaty.

In Egypt, Gorman shows, the anarchists' syndicalist unions united workers into inclusive "international" unions, despite divisions fanned both by employers and by sections of the Egyptian nationalist movement which drew on nativist and ethnocentric appeals. The movement was committed to "an internationalist mission and membership", and took great efforts to deal with "ethnic, religious and linguistic pluralism", "engaging with the diversity of Egyptian society at large".

The South African context presented a host of acute problems that militated against uniting the popular classes across race and ethnic lines. The majority of the working class were African workers, drawn from conquered peoples, mostly unfree labourers subject to internal passports, segregation and indenture. Free Coloured and Indian workers likewise were subject to discriminatory practices in accordance with the racist ideal of white supremacy elaborated under the post1910 state. The white working class, restive and distrustful of big companies who might replace them with unfree black labour, organised along segregationist lines in bodies like SAIF.

Anarchists and syndicalists in South Africa, however, as van der Walt demonstrates, were distinguished by a commitment to interracial labour unity, and "the abolition of all forms of native indenture, compound and passport systems; and the lifting of the native worker to the political and industrial status of the white". Most favoured an IWWstyle One Big Union as the means to sweep away such "tyrant laws", uniting the working class in the struggle for the social revolution. The syndicalist unions it formed amongst Africans, Coloureds and Indians were seen as stepping stones to this great goal.

Internationalism, anti-colonialism, and national liberation

It is ironic that the English language literature on anarchism and syndicalism provides nothing comparable to the rich scholarship on Marxist approaches to anti-imperialist struggles. Even nationalist narratives concede anarchists and syndicalists played a key role in 19th and 20th century struggles. Flores Magón lies buried alongside generals and presidents in the Rotunda of Illustrious Men in the National Pantheon at Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, "part of the nationalistic myth of the 'institutionalised Mexican revolution'".[97] In the Republic of Korea, anarchists Yu Rim (1894–1961), Bak Yeol (1902–1972) and Yu ha-myŏng (1891–1985) are commemorated as "independence activists", and Kim Jwa-Jin's birthplace is a national monument.[98] Meanwhile, Shin Chaeho (1880–1936)—the most famous Korean anarchist—features in school textbooks. The 110th anniversary of Makhno's birth received official celebrations in Gulyai-Polye, stressing his role

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[97] Colin M. MacLachlan, *Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: the political trials of Ricardo Flores Magón in the United States*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1991, 109.

[98] Seo Dong-shin, 2007, "Korean Anarchists Pursuing Third Way", *Korea Times*, 26 January 2007; Hongseong Portal, "Commemorative Festival for Admiral Kim JwaJin's Victory" online at http://hongseong.go.kr/english/festival/festival_05_01.html, accessed on 6 June 2008.

as an independence activist.[99] In Dublin, Ireland, the name of the De Leonist syndicalist James Connolly (1868–1916, executed after the failed Easter Rising), adorns train stations and a hospital; like Kim, he has a statue, although this one was sponsored by the unions.[100] The National Union of Mineworkers in South Africa (allied to the ruling nationalist African National Congress, or ANC), is investigating establishing a "workers' monument" to the "worker hero" Thibedi.[101]

The papers in this collection are, then, of the utmost importance in opening up a serious examination of anarchist and syndicalist responses to imperialism. By the late 19th century, imperialist economic and political penetration had evoked various political and cultural responses across the colonial and postcolonial world. Collaboration and accommodation with empire were always important currents. However, there were major independence struggles across the Spanish empire in the 1890s, followed by colonial Europe in the 1910s. The late 1910s saw protests sweep the African and Asian colonies, and the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans, along with rising demands for more economic independence in Latin America and Southern Africa. By the late 1920s, mass independence movements were becoming important in Africa and Asia. From the 1940s, the remnants of formal imperial rule were collapsing across the world (at least outside of the rapidly expanding Soviet realm).

It is important to stress that nationalism was one—*but only one*— current in these national liberation struggles; the two are all too often conflated. Nationalism is a definite doctrine, which views the world as comprised of discrete nations, each requiring its own nation-state to express its general will. Nationalist movements therefore centre on uniting all sections of the nation, regardless of class, towards that end. This outlook differs radically from the anarchists and syndicalists' insistence on class-based internationalism and anti-statism, and generally also (as we will show below) to their own visions of decolonisation and self-determination.

Indebted to European revolutionary thinking, colonial nationalist movements were a reaction against European (and other) imperialism,[102] usually launched by frustrated native elites. In practice, colonial nationalists vacillated between accommodation with empire, and demands for more radical autonomy, even statehood. Only from around 1919 did the latter demands begin, fitfully, to dominate colonial nationalism.[103] Even then, however, nationalism often struggled to assume leadership of national liberation movements, because religious- and class-based currents were also important forces.

Three major anarchist and syndicalist approaches to independence struggles

The notion that anarchism and syndicalism ignored anti-imperialist struggles is indefensible. Anarchism and syndicalism were doctrinally opposed to imperialism, and thus, in principle, *al-*

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[99] Sergey Shevchenko, 12 January 1999, " 'Makhno is our Tsar, Makhno is our God' ", online at http://www.hartford-hwcom/archives/63/354.html, accessed on 10 December 2007.

[100] 1916 Rebellion Walking Tour, "The History: Statue of James Connolly", http:// www.1916rising.com/pic_connollystatue.html, accessed on 15 September 2008.

[101] Resolutions of the 2006 congress of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, online at http://www.cosatu.org.za/cong2006/congress06/resolu.pdf, section 1.12, accessed 15 September 2008.

[102] Bocjun, 132–133.

[103] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: self-determination and the international origins of anti-colonial nationalism.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 5–6

ways supported some notion of national freedom. Support for national freedom followed from the anarchist opposition to hierarchy, and stress on voluntary cooperation and self-management. "The right of freely uniting and separating", Bakunin wrote, "is the first and most important of all political rights".[104] In place of state centralism and nationalism, he advocated a "future social organisation" that was "carried out from the bottom up, by free association, with unions and localities federated by communes, regions, nations, and, finally, a great universal and international federation".[105] National self-determination itself would, in short, be premised on individual freedom through cooperation, and classlessness as well as *statelessness*.

The difficulty was, however, that many of the national liberation struggles in the colonial and postcolonial world were influenced by *nationalism*, or at least, the nationalist dream of independent statehood. The question was therefore posed: how should anarchists and syndicalists relate to nationalism, and to struggles for independence that stopped short of the social revolution for "a great universal and international federation" and a new "social organisation"?

Anarchists and syndicalists seemed to have adopted three main approaches.[106] The first of the anarchist and syndicalist responses was that current independence struggles were futile, inasmuch as they were viewed as simply replacing foreign with local oppressors. There were, for instance, substantial tensions between Cuba's early anarchist-led unions, stressing class struggle, and the separatist movement, stressing the national unity across class, which is touched upon in Shaffer's chapter.[107] Key anarchists like Enrique Roig de San Martín (1843– 1889) suggested that any change short of full-blown social revolution (delivering national freedom) was futile, and sought to distance the unions from the separatists.[108] This position effectively maintained that national liberation struggles were basically *nationalist*, and would thus inevitably generate narrowly nationalist outcomes: a new state, and the persistence of a class system. This left these anarchists and syndicalists outside of national liberation movements; notwithstanding their principled opposition to imperialism and colonialism, it often meant they sidestepped these issues for an ostensible focus on class struggle.

The second modal approach was quite the opposite: it actively and uncritically embraced nationalism. Like Roig de San Martín, it tended to conflate nationalism and national liberation, except that it saw this relationship as *positive* and necessary. In his pioneering work on Korean anarchism, John Crump drew attention to a tendency that was so deeply imbued with nationalism that it "flouted the basic principles of anarchism".[109] Yu ha-myŏng and Yu Rim served in the Korean Provisional Government in exile, and with Ha formed an Independent Workers and Peasants Party (IWFP) to run in the first post-independence elections. Yu Rim stated that "We Korean Anarchists are not literal non-governmentists" but "want to establish an independent and democratic unified government".[110] In China, likewise, the anarchists Li Shizeng (1881–1973) and Wu Zhihui (1865–1953) were closely associated with what Dirlik labels the anti-Communist "na-

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[104] Quoted in Paul Eltzbacher, *Anarchism: exponents of the anarchist philosophy*, London: Freedom Press, [1900] 1960, 81.

[105] Mikhail Bakunin, "The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State", in Dolgoff (ed.), [1871] 1971, 270.

[106] This draws on ideas that previously appeared in Lucien van der Walt, "Pour Une Histoire De L'anti-Impérialisme Anarchiste: 'Dans Cette Lutte, Seuls Les Ouvriers Et Les Paysans Iront Jusqu'au Bout' ", *Refractions*, 8, 2002: 27–37, and van der Walt and Schmidt, 297–321.

[107] Also see Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba", 309–321.

[108] Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba", 361–363.

[109] Crump, 46.

[110] Quoted in Ha, 144.

tionalistically obsessed *Guomindang* Right". In practice, they saw the nationalist programme as a necessary step towards a future transition toward anarcho-communism.[111] In other words, this approach saw the formation of independent nation-states as a partial break with imperialism, and, indeed, a *precondition* for a future anarchist society. From this stages approach followed a willingness to set aside differences with the nationalists, downplaying anti-statism and class struggle—at least until independent statehood was achieved.

The third anarchist and syndicalist position on independence struggles was the most sophisticated, and arguably the most important historically: a project of critical engagement and radicalisation. National liberation struggles were seen as a crucial part of the libertarian programme, and of the class struggle. While current independence struggles could be captured by bourgeois and other elite forces, this was not inevitable. Nationalist and elitist forces could be displaced, with the intervention of anarchists and syndicalists pushing national liberation struggles directly towards internationalist and anti-statist social revolution. Success would *merge* class and national struggles, rather than somewhat artificially separate the two.

From 1892, as Shaffer indicates, Cuban anarchism largely committed itself to the separatist struggle. It declared unequivocal support for "the collective liberty of a people, even though the collective liberty desired is that of emancipation from the tutelage of another people", but added the struggle must lead to the predominance of the interests of the popular classes.[112] Many joined José Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Cubano*, or PRC). When the War of Independence started in 1895, anarchists made a "huge" contribution, providing soldiers, resources, propaganda and subversion—and martyrs.[113] The anarchists retained their own agenda throughout, and, after formal independence, were relentless critics of the postcolonial elite and its United States backers.

This position, in short, centred on *contesting* the national liberation struggle *within* a larger movement that included nationalists. At its heart was a conceptual distinction between *nationalism* (merely aiming at a new state) and *national liberation in general* (potentially able to move to social revolution); and, from this, a determination to achieve leadership of the national liberation struggle. From this perspective, anarchists and syndicalists must participate in national liberation struggles, while remaining sceptical of the nationalists and their plans for statehood. Genuine national liberation did not mean independent statehood, but the satisfaction of the demands of the masses for social and economic equality via a libertarian socialist society.

For example, Connolly—as O'Connor notes—was well known for the dictum that since "the Irish national struggle was also a social struggle, only the working class could complete the struggle, and only socialism could guarantee real economic independence". The other key figure in Irish syndicalism, Jim Larkin (1874–1947) held a similar position. Both men gave to socialist republicanism a distinctly syndicalist edge. The syndicalists in South Africa in the late 1910s—admirers of Connolly—similarly rejected African (and Afrikaner) nationalism in favour of national liberation through an interracial One Big Union. In South Africa, according to van der Walt, syndicalist formations like the International Socialist League viewed the revolutionary One Big Union as proletarian forge in which a common society embracing all, regardless of colour, would

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[111] Crump, 47–48; Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Ch. 11.

[112] Fernandez, 15–38; also see Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba", 413– 423, 433–442.

[113] Casanovas, "Labour and Colonialism in Cuba", 424.

be created. Rather than create a nationstate, they sought to establish a self-managed libertarian socialist "Industrial Republic", as "an integral part of the International Industrial Republic".

In Puerto Rico, Shaffer notes, anarchists challenged the mainstream independence groups, insisting that real independence had to involve an anarchist and communist restructuring of society. In Mexico, the PLM's work provides a clear example of an anarchist current aiming to push struggles against Western domination and local elites in a revolutionary direction. At the same time, PLM experience shows the difficult questions that participation in such struggles can pose. Most notable is the PLM's attempt to radicalise the Plan of San Diego (PSD), a 1915 separatist revolt in southern Texas by Mexicans and MexicanAmericans that had overtones of racial warfare.

In China, too, collaboration with the nationalist party, the *Goumdindang*, was a controversial issue, with some anarchists seeking to tactically use *Guomindang* resources for their own, distinct, purposes: Dirlik's and Hwang's chapters deal with some of the complexities this entailed. The revolutionary outlook on national liberation was also very influential among Korean anarchists. Militants like Yi Jeonggyu and Bak aimed at social revolution, rather than simply a political revolution that aimed merely at independence. Hwang challenges Crump's emphasis on the nationalist inclination of the Korean movement, arguing that while anarchism was "re-read" to stress independence, independence was often rethought as part of a larger set of transnational and universal problems and concerns. Shin's 1923 "Declaration of the Korean Revolution" fits well: besides independence from Japan, it stressed the abolition of class rule and exploitation in "an ideal Korea".[114]

In Egypt, Gorman shows, the anarchists disagreed with the nationalists, but engaged in several *de facto* alliances. One was the participation of the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta in the 1882 revolt led by Ahmad 'Urabi, and this convergence was also in evidence in the 1919 Revolution, marked by countrywide agitation against British rule, and syndicalist activity between foreign and Egyptian labour. For its part, the Military Revolutionary Soviet of the *Makhnovischna* declared,

> When speaking of Ukrainian independence, we do not mean national independence in Petliura's [Symon Petliura, head of the nationalist Directory] sense, but the social independence of workers and peasants. We declare that Ukrainian, and all other, working people have the right to self-determination not as an 'independent nation', but as 'independent workers'.

To the extent that the activities of *Makhnovischna* and Korean People's Association in Manchuria constituted social revolutions, they would exemplify a successful drive to push national liberation well beyond the bounds of narrow nationalism.

The third anarchist and syndicalist position on independence struggles was very much in line with Bakunin's support for independence movements on the basis that national liberation had to be fought "as much in the economic as in the political interests of the masses". A movement dominated by "ambitious intent to set up a powerful State", and the agenda of "a privileged

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[114] Shin Chaeho, "Declaration of the Korean Revolution", in Robert Graham (ed.), *Anarchism: a documentary history of libertarian ideas, volume 1: from anarchy to anarchism, 300 CE to 1939*, Montréal: Black Rose, [1923] 2005, 373–376.

class" would end up a "retrogressive, disastrous, counter-revolutionary movement".[115] He believed that:[116]

> Every exclusively political revolution—be it in defence of national independence or for internal change...—that does not aim at the immediate and real political and economic emancipation of people will be a false revolution. Its objectives will be unattainable and its consequences reactionary.

The "statist path involving the establishment of separate … States" was "entirely ruinous for the great masses of the people", because it did not abolish class power but simply changed the nationality of the ruling class.[117]

A Note on the Volume's Organisation and Scope

This volume is divided into two parts. The first part consists of studies that examine anarchism and syndicalism in the context of European and Japanese colonialism. We define colonialism in a straight-forward manner to refer to peoples and regions of the world subject to direct foreign political and economic control. Some may find controversial the designation of China as part of the colonial world. Although it was never completely colonized, it *was* systematically subjected to an expanding range of formal concessions of territory and rights from the 19th century, and then to a protracted colonial conquest from the 1930s. The case can thus be made for its inclusion in the colonial section given its colonial and "semi-colonial" status by the early 20th century.

The second part groups studies that probe the experience of anarchism and syndicalism in the context of postcolonial situations, which, given the period covered by this volume, necessarily means primarily Latin American cases. For the purposes of this book, "postcolonial" denotes ex-colonies that, despite independent polities, remain profoundly influenced by the legacies of colonialism. In particular, it refers to countries subject to a clear (but widely varying and contested) degree of indirect external control and of relative economic dependence within the world capitalist economy's division of labour. These external constraints condition, but do not determine, internal systems of domination by class, race, culture, and gender.

No single volume can possibly address the entirety of the historical experience of anarchism and syndicalism in the colonial and postcolonial world. This book focuses fundamentally on several key analytical questions: Which social groups formed the base of support for anarchist and syndicalist movements in the colonial and postcolonial world between 1870 and 1940? What were the doctrinal tenets, programmatic goals, and organisational structures of these movements? What methods of struggle did they employ? How did they address racial and ethnic cleavages? How did these movements grapple with colonialism, national liberation, imperialism, state formation, and social revolution?

Other questions and lines of inquiry also need to be investigated. We suggest that gender ideologies and practice, race relations, and generational dynamics in anarchist and syndicalist movements in the colonial and postcolonial world require further scholarly research. Likewise, more

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[115] Bakunin, quoted in Guérin, 68.

[116] Bakunin, "Federalism, Socialism, Anti-Theologism", 99.

[117] Mikhail Bakunin, "Statism and Anarchy", in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy: Selected Works by the Activist-Founder of World Anarchism*, London: George Allen and Unwin, (1873) 1971, 343.

studies on the countercultural and internationalist dimensions and influences of these movements are needed. We are also cognizant of the limited coverage of our volume. Certainly, anarchist and syndicalist (and anarchist and syndicalist-influenced) movements in other African, Eastern European, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Central American, and Pacific island contexts deserve scholarly examination. The post-1940 period also needs attention. We hope this volume opens up new vistas on the history of labour and the left, and the materials collected here will help to shape future research agendas.

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Part One: Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial World

"Diverse in race, religion and nationality … but united in aspirations of civil progress": The Anarchist Movement in Egypt 1860–1940

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Anarchism first appeared in Egypt among Italian political refugees and workers during the 1860s. Nurtured by a developing international network of labour, transport and communications across the Mediterranean, it expanded beyond Italian circles to attract members from across Egypt's diverse ethnic and religious communities over the following decades. Though heterogeneous in character, different anarchist trends shared a discourse of radical social emancipation that in its propaganda and public actions proclaimed the universality of humankind and decried the evils of capitalism, state power and religious dogma.

In the years after 1900, anarcho-syndicalism played an energetic and central role in the development of the labour movement in Egypt, articulating the rights of workers in the struggle against capital and promoting an internationalist activism that resisted nationality, religion and race as the basis of organisation as it countered imperialist, nationalist and state-based perspectives. Yet, while it rejected nationalism as an organising principle, anarchism did at times make common cause with the nationalists against imperialism and arguably influenced the strategy and tactics of the nationalist movement.

Origins

The presence of a foreign working community in Egypt at the end of the 19th century has its roots in the policies pursued by Muhammad Ali, ruler of Egypt from 1805 until 1849. Embarking on a program to modernise the military, state administration and the economy, he had encouraged those with the necessary skills to migrate to Egypt to assist in the task. Under his successors, Sa'id (1854–1863) and Isma'il (1863–1879), an impressive series of infrastructure projects, all requiring skilled labour went ahead—the establishment of a railway network, the expansion of the canal system and an extensive urban building program. The flagship project, the construction of the Suez Canal, required large numbers Italian, Greek, Syrian and Dalmatian workers, in addition to Egyptian labourers before being completed in 1869.[1] However, the availability and employment of such labour, both longterm migrants and seasonal workers, was not a phenomenon confined to Egypt but part of a broader trend throughout the Mediterranean and beyond to the

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[1] Athanase G. Politis, *L'Hellénisme et L'Egypte Moderne*, Paris: Félix Alcan, 1930, vol. 2, 82–85.

New World that laid the foundations of an international network not only in labour but capital, goods and ideas.[2]

That anarchism should first find a following amongst Italians in Egypt is not surprising given the presence of a significant Italian working community, the established tradition of Egypt as a place of refuge for political exiles and the historical role played by Italians in the development of the anarchist movement.[3] In time this combination of labour and political radicalism proved potent. The Italian Workers Society (*Società Operaio Italiana*), formed in Alexandria in the early 1860s to protect the interest of its members, was the first in a series of Italian organisations that took on an increasingly political character.

By the middle of the next decade veterans from Garibaldi's campaigns and other radicals established Thought and Action (*Pensiero ed Azione*), a political association based on Mazzinian principles.[4] Soon after in 1876, a more radical splinter group was recognised as an official section of the First International in Alexandria.[5] Additional sections were formed in Cairo, Port Said and Ismailia the following year and presented their first report at the Anti-Authoritarian International held at Verviers, Belgium that September.[6]

Although strongly Italian in character, even at this early stage the movement was seeking to expand its activities beyond the boundaries of this ethnic community. The report presented at Verviers does not survive but the published proceedings show that the Alexandria section, with the support of the section in Cairo, and the Greek Federation, successfully sponsored a proposal, calling on the federal bureau to disseminate socialist propaganda in the East "in Italian, Illyrian, Greek, Turkish and Arabic".[7] The dissolution of the International soon after meant the motion came to nothing yet it was a clear statement of the intention to disseminate the ideas of the First International beyond European communities to the indigenous peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean.

The international network

The anarchist movement was not only global in ambition but international in connections, scope and operation. The Egyptian participation at Verviers was the beginning of a continuing pattern of involvement with international congresses. At the London conference in July 1881 that unsuccessfully sought to reconstitute the International, the Egyptian sections, now in fed-

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[2] Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, "Levantine Trajectories: The Formulation and Dissemination of Radical Ideas in and between Beirut, Cairo, and Alexandria, 1860–1914", Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2003, 318–326.

[3] Ersilio Michel, *Esuli Italiani in Egitto (1815–1861)*, Pisa, 1958. It should be noted that contemporary sources usually refer to 'internationalists' although the subsequent development of the movement makes clear that the majority of these were anarchists with some legalitarian socialists (Marxists).

[4] Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–72) was a prominent Italian political figure associated with the First International who held democratic, republican and, for a time, radical views.

[5] Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, Florence: Editrice, 1976, vol. 2, 282n. Bettini's short essay, 'Appunti per una storia dell'anarchismo italiano in Egitto', 281–288 stands out as a pioneering work on Italian anarchism in Egypt.

[6] James Guillaume, *L'Internationale, Documents et Souvenirs, 1864–1878*, Paris: Gerard Lebovici, 1985, vol. IV, 258, 262. The Anti-Authoritarian wing of the International had been set up by Mikhail Bakunin and his allies following the split with Karl Marx at the Hague Congress of the First International in 1872.

[7] Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 281n; see also Guillaume, *L'Internationale,* vol. IV, 259, 261. All translations are mine.

eration with Istanbul, were represented by Errico Malatesta, one of the pre-eminent anarchists of his time.[8] Francesco Cini, who lived for many years in Egypt from the 1870s, attended the revolutionary socialist congress at Capolago in Italy in 1891 that strongly endorsed an anarchist program. Later, Cini would be chosen as the delegate for Egyptian anarchists at the London conference of August 1914 subsequently cancelled due to the outbreak of the war.[9] The pattern continued beyond the war with the participation of Alexandria anarchists at the Second Congress of the Italian Anarchist Union (*Unione Anarchica Italiana*), held in Italy in July 1920.[10]

More informally, the international anarchist network was lubricated by the frequent movement of individual militants between different countries and across continents, from Asia to Europe, North Africa and the Americas. Egypt itself had the advantages of serving as a relatively safe political haven while not being far from Europe. In time, it developed into a significant anarchist centre at the eastern end of the Mediterranean with close connections to Greece and Turkey, attested by the confederation between anarchists in Egypt and Istanbul during the 1880s. Regular connections were also maintained with groups in Tunis, Palestine and Lebanon, as individual activists crisscrossed the Mediterranean or followed the line of the North African coast, utilising a network based on personal recommendation and shared ideological vision. These links operated far beyond the Mediterranean, extending not only with the main European centres but also across the Atlantic to the United States, particularly in the greater New York area, and to South America, in Brazil and Argentina.

While most of this movement was perforce of the rank-and-file fleeing repression, carrying confidential information, or seeking economic opportunity, leading anarchists also travelled for personal and political purposes. Egypt was a regular destination. Amilcare Cipriani, a key if mercurial figure of revolutionary politics during the 19th century, was perhaps one of the first, visiting twice in the 1860s.[11] Other notable visitors included the celebrated geographer, Élisée Reclus (1884),[12] Malatesta (1878, 1882–83), Luigi Galleani (1900–1901)[13] and Pietro Gori, who passed through Egypt and Palestine on a lecture tour in early 1904.[14] The presence of such charismatic activists and thinkers no doubt inspired the local anarchist community to greater efforts even as they spurred on security authorities to greater surveillance.

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[8] C. Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin a Malatesta*, Milan: Rizzoli, 204. Malatesta (1853–1932) led a tireless life of militancy in Europe, the Americas and the Middle East over the next fifty years.

[9] Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism 1864–1892*, Princeton University Press, 1993, 255–257; Ambasciata d'Italia in Egitto, Archivio Storico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Italy b. 142 (1914) Ministry of Interior memo, 22 March 1914, hereafter AIE.

[10] Emilio Falco, *Armando Borghi e gli anarchici italiani 1900–1922*, Urbino: QuattroVenti, 1992, 211n.

[11] Cipriani (1844–1918) was present at both the foundation of the International in London in 1864 and the Paris Commune in 1871. On his second visit to Egypt in September 1867, he was involved in the death of three men, an affair for which he was condemned to 20 years' transportation in New Caledonia in 1881, Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiana*, 196–197; *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani* s.v. Cipriani, Amilcare.

[12] Henriette Chardak, *Élisée Reclus, une vie: l'homme qui aimait la terre*, Paris: Stock, 1997, 403–407. Reclus (1830–1905) stands in the highest rank of 19th century anarchist thinkers and was an important influence on educational thought in the movement.

[13] Galleani (1861–1931) had escaped imprisonment on the island of Pantelleria and taken refuge in Egypt at the end of 1900. In November 1901 he left for the United States to assume the editorship of the anarchist newspaper *La Cronaca Sovversiva*: Ugo Fedeli, *Luigi Galleani, Quarant'anni di lotte rivoluzione (1891–1931)*, Cesena: L'Antistato, 1956, 106–107.

[14] Carlo Molaschi, *Pietro Gori*, Il Pensiero: Milano, 1959, 13.

Important as these visits were, the written word arguably sustained a more regular sense of international community and global political mission among anarchists. An 'imagined community' created and consolidated not by 'print capitalism' but print internationalism, the scattered arms of the movement were kept connected and informed by an expanding anarchist press from the second half of the 19th century.[15] Information flowed in both directions. Activists in Egypt regularly subscribed to anarchist newspapers published in Europe, North Africa, and the Americas, most often in Italian but also in French and Greek.[16] Militants in Egypt contributed items on Egyptian affairs to anarchist newspapers abroad, particularly before the development of a local anarchist press. When newspapers such as *La Tribuna Libera* ("The Free Tribune") and *L'Operaio* ("The Worker") were established, they were available to an international readership that could follow labour and social affairs in Egypt.

In this way anarchists in Egypt (and elsewhere) were able to keep informed of the fortunes of the movement at home and abroad being provided with theoretical discussions, commentary, and serialised literature that promoted a shared sense of the international nature of the anarchist project. Many publications were dedicated to workers' issues, offering insights, debates and discussion of common difficulties on matters of labour organisation and strategy. Facilitated by an increasingly developed international transport system, particularly steamship services, the international anarchist press served as a vital channel for dissemination and diffusion of ideas a movement that saw itself as international in practice and conception.

The local scene

Despite the reverses suffered in Europe at the end of the 1870s and early 1880s, the anarchist movement continued to grow internationally. In 1881 in Alexandria, anarchists had established a European Social Studies Circle (*Circolo europeo di studii sociali*) where they discussed social questions and were operating a clandestine press for the printing of posters. In the same year a conference was convened at Sidi Gabr and attended by about a hundred activists from different anarchist groups across Egypt.[17]

At this very time Egypt was in the middle of a deep political crisis. Unable to service the debt incurred to fund expensive infrastructure projects and Ismail's expensive lifestyle, Egypt had been forced to accept European control over its treasury in 1876. Three years later under European pressure, Isma'il had been deposed and succeeded by his son Tawfiq who endeavoured to satisfy Egypt's creditors. A contest for power developed between elements of the Turko-Circassian elite and Egyptian Nationalist officers led by Ahmad 'Urabi who sought a constitutional government. By the beginning of 1882, 'Urabi as War Minister was confronted by hostile British and French governments determined to defend European investments and their own resident nationals.

Characterised as anti-foreign, 'Urabi did in fact receive support from some elements of the foreign community, including Italian workers in Alexandria and a number of anarchists.[18] In

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[15] On Anderson's thesis of the role of print capitalism in creating the 'imagined' national community see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1981.

[16] Among the newspapers read by anarchists in Egypt were *Il Libertario* (La Spezia), *Il Grido della Folla* (Milan), *Sosialistis* (Athens), *La Rivoluzione Sociale* (London), *Le Réveil* (Geneva), *L'Operaio* (Tunis), *La Libertà* (New York), *La Protesta Humana* (San Francisco), and *La Nuova Civiltà* (Buenos Aires).

[17] Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 282, 305.

[18] On Italian workers, see Tareq Y. Ismael and Rifa'at El-Sa'id, *The Communist Movement in Egypt, 1920–1988*,

June, following their bombardment of Alexandria British forces landed in the city and marched against Urabi, defeating him at a last stand at Tel al-Kabir in September. British occupation of the rest of the country quickly followed.

In the early years of the British occupation, the anarchist movement in Egypt was plagued by the fragmentation, disputation and factionalism that characterised it elsewhere.[19] During the 1870s anarchists and socialists had been uneasy comrades under the umbrella of the International. The defection of Andrea Costa (an influential figure in Egypt) to legalitarian socialism in 1879 had caused a significant local schism. The movement suffered other internal divisions, particularly the enduring conflict between anti-organisationalists and anarchosyndicalists on the role of collective association in achieving anarchist aims. Until the end of the 19th century, the former trend appears to have been in the ascendancy but with the growth of the labour movement anarchosyndicalists expanded their influence. Other disputes reflected the power of personalities. Ugo Parrini, a key figure and staunch anti-organisationalist, was notorious for his uncompromising style and was a persistent obstacle to greater cooperation among anarchists. Not until after his death in 1906 was a national program of action agreed which provided a solid basis for collaboration within the Egyptian movement.

Although Italians remained the dominant ethnic group among anarchists in Egypt right up until World War I, over time the movement would expand beyond its original Italian nucleus and take on a more multiethnic character. Greek anarchists, particularly, produced a distinguished record of syndicalist activity, leading militants, and an impressive press and pamphlet literature, but the participation of Jews, Germans, and a variety of Eastern European nationalities was also notable.[20]

The extent of the participation of Arabophone Egyptians, while undoubted, is still difficult to quantify. While apparently absent from anarchist circles before 1900, the appearance of native Egyptians in important industrial actions, educational activities and anarchist meetings during the first decade of the new century suggests a growing involvement.[21] That impression is confirmed by the concerns expressed by Egyptians and the British authorities about the potential threat of anarchism and the new radical ideas posed towards Egyptian society.[22] The ethnic diversity of the anarchists in Egypt was matched by the wide range of occupational backgrounds. The majority of anarchists were skilled artisans such as carpenters, masons, cabinetmakers, shoemakers, stonecutters, tailors and painters, a phenomenon usually explained by the strong tradition of the guild, the better education and the relatively greater economic security of skilled tradesmen over factory workers.[23] Some came from the *petite bourgeoisie*, particularly grocers, jewellers, tavern and bar owners, whose businesses offered a useful place for meetings. Yet other anarchists had a commercial background being involved in trade, owning or working for merchant houses—particularly true of Jews in Alexandria—or came from the professional class, chiefly doc-

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Syracuse UP, 13; on anarchists, see below.

[19] Ugo Parrini's own account of a movement riven by personal and ideological differences, republished in Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 303–307, while no doubt generally self-serving, is probably reliable on this point.

[20] On Greek anarchists, see my forthcoming article.

[21] For example, see Enrico Pea, *La vita in Egitto*, Milan: Mondadori, 1949.

[22] See, for example, Egyptian concerns, Zachary Lockman, 'Imagining the Working Class: Culture, Nationalism, and Class Formation in Egypt, 1899–1914', *Poetics Today*, 15 (1994) 176n; for British concerns regarding young native Egyptians returning from studies abroad, FO Foreign Office, National Archives, UK, 371/1115/ 46990, Lord Kitchener to Sir Edward Grey, 14 Nov. 1911, hereafter FO.

[23] Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism*, 78–79.

tors, lawyers, pharmacists, journalists and writers. By the end of the 19th century there was a shift away from the artisan core to the new working class, particularly cigarette workers, printers and the employees of the new large utilities, such as the tramway companies, providing new members. The great majority of anarchists attested in the record are men but the establishment of a separate women's section in Cairo in the 1870s and the attention given to women's issues suggests significant initial and ongoing female participation.[24]

Addressing the East

A diverse, multi-dimensional and sometimes contradictory assemblage of ideas, anarchism called for the moral, political, economic and social emancipation of all men and women through international solidarity and brotherhood. In promoting 'the Idea', it called for a struggle against the main causes of human exploitation, ignorance and injustice: capital (and its agent, the bourgeoisie), the state and dogmatic religious authority.

Anarchists never came to an absolute agreement on how this struggle might be conducted in Egypt but there was recognition of the particular difficulties the anarchist message faced there. Dr Enrico Insabato, an anarchist in Cairo, believed that European anarchists had first to disassociate themselves from those things that had overshadowed relations between East and West in order to effectively promote their message.[25] He singled out three particular aspects: the tradition of religious division (which he accused priests of creating); Western attempts at political domination of the East, notably the Crusades and the more recent 'clerical and diplomatic dynamite' conducted by certain Western powers; and finally, the forces of international capital.

> We must show [them, i.e. the Arabs] that not all Europeans are exploiters and besides that the enemies of the Orient are also ours … For them irresponsible anonymous capital is European [but] the day they become aware that the capitalist does not constitute the lowest part of the European population, they will give just form to their hatred.

Once anarchists found a "common language" and established intellectual communication with an audience in the East, Insabato believed that "the Idea is not only possible here but that it is destined to be the most illuminating fulcrum for the future development of European-Oriental relations".[26]

Anarchist language in Egypt was strongest when it was attacking the evils of capitalism. While it also believed that dogmatic religious authority was one of the chief forces responsible for ignorance and injustice and called for emancipation not only from churches but "from synagogues, from temples and from mosques",[27] Islam as a faith does not seem to have been specifically targeted in anarchist literature. This may have been because its non-hierarchical structure put it in

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[24] Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 282n. A list of 53 anarchists, which contains the names of 6 or 7 women, may provide a representative sample of the movement in Alexandria in the early 1880s: Polizia Internazionale, Archivio Storico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Italy, b. 41 Rome to Alex, 7 April 1881, hereafter PI. It should also be noted that the 'anarchist couple' was a regular feature of the movement.

[25] For the following, see Enrico Insabato, 'Le Idee Avanzate in Egitto (II)', *Lux!* Vol. 1 no. 3 (16 July 1903), 37–38.

[26] Insabato, 'Le Idee Avanzate in Egitto (II)', 37.

[27] Quote from a 1906 May Day poster, AIE, b. 107 (1904–1906) Anarchici.

a favourable light compared to other religions. Insabato himself had singled out Catholicism and Brahmanism as anarchism's religious adversaries since they taught "blind and passive obedience" and were thus a type of "intellectual alcoholism". Islam, by contrast, was praised for its tolerance by Raoul Canivet at the opening of the Free Popular University.[28]

The anarchist attitude to the Egyptian state was much more hostile even if it appears not to be detailed or systematic. There was general condemnation of the coercive aspects of the state, particularly the actions of the police, state security services and the culture of surveillance. The injustice of laws and the abuse of power were regularly criticised. Anarchists eschewed involvement in institutional politics in principle but they believed that the particular character of the Egyptian government, which impeded the formation of political parties and electoral contests, meant that the anarchist approach was better suited to Egyptian conditions than the pursuit of power through parliamentary contests advocated by legalitarian socialists.[29]

Further research is required to present a more complete picture of how anarchists viewed Islam and the Egyptian state. Pragmatic considerations, such as the viability of anti-religious rhetoric or concerns of deportation may have played some role in determining the limits of activism. Whether for ideological or practical reasons, anarchists did not target religion or the state head on. The program of action agreed at the anarchist conference held in 1909, one of the most widely agreed manifestos of the Egyptian movement, observed the standard demands for the abolition of private property and the state, but it gave more attention to the goal of social transformation through the use of propaganda, education and workers' associations, urging members

> ... to take part collectively and individually in all agitation of a moral, economic and social nature, actively participating in all struggles between capital and labour, and [...] to maintain in their public and private life that consistency between ideal and action that attracts popular sympathy towards anarchists.[30]

The commitment to its internationalist mission and membership remained a central theme of anarchist discourse in Egypt. Public statements consistently emphasized the universal solidarity of all peoples. As one May Day poster announced,

> On this day, across the sea and borders, conscious minorities of people, diverse in race, religion, nationality and customs but united in aspirations of civil progress, love, peace, well-being, liberty and hope greet the fateful date of 1 May.[31]

Such sentiments were commonly expressed by anarchists internationally. In Egypt, the reality of a multi-ethnic working class gave this ideal of people of different races, religions and nationalities united in solidarity more than rhetorical force. Particularly after 1900, this was a distinctive feature of Egyptian anarchism: that it sought to engage with the ethnic, religious and linguistic pluralism experienced by many in their everyday and working life to promote an internationalist message. At public conferences and labour meetings audiences of different faiths and nationalities gathered to listen to the same message delivered in a number of languages. This is not to

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[28] Anthony Gorman, "Anarchists in Education: The Free Popular University in Egypt (1901)", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 41: 3, 2005, 308.

[29] Enrico Insabato, 'Le Idee Avanzate in Egitto', *Lux*! Vol. 1 no. 2 (15 June 1903) 7.

[30] AIE b. 120 (1909–1910) Stampa sovversiva, 'Perche siamo anarchici—Che cosa vogliamo'.

[31] Dated 1906 and signed 'Gli Anarchici' (The Anarchists), AIE b. 107 (1904–1906) Anarchici.

say that this internationalist call did not meet obstacles, sometimes within the movement itself though more often without. Nevertheless, the record suggests that anarchism was in principle committed to adapting to and engaging with the diversity of Egyptian society at large.

Propagating the Idea

Anarchists in Egypt overwhelmingly favoured propaganda of the word over "propaganda of the deed". Although there were some cases of workplace-related violence, they eschewed political assassination and violence against members of the government or ruling class even if they applauded such acts carried out by their comrades in Europe and the United States.[32] Nevertheless, local consular authorities were eager to promote a sense of the threat that anarchism posed to society at large.

The sensational announcement in October 1898 of the arrest of eighteen anarchists in Alexandria on charges of conspiracy to assassinate the German Emperor Wilhelm II during his visit to the Middle East was perhaps the most obvious example.[33] Splashed across the local and international press to maximise its impact, the affair seems to have been cooked up by an agent provocateur, perhaps with some assistance from the Italian consulate, and thus reflects more the concerns of the authorities than any real threat of revolutionary violence by local activists. In the trial the following year, the accused were all acquitted of the main charge although they were found guilty of lesser charges of possession of prohibited literature. A series of rumours of conspiracies ascribed to anarchists in subsequent years should probably be put in the same category.[34]

Rather than favour political violence, anarchists in Egypt preferred the spoken or printed word to disseminate their ideas, principally through communal study, public meetings, demonstrations and the press. Small groups had been organised at least since the early 1880s as a forum for holding discussions and attracting new members.[35] This pattern continued into the new century but it took on a broader compass. The "European Circle" of 1881 gave way to the International Reading Room (*Sala di lettura internazionale*), a small library of anarchist books and newspapers in Cairo, which opened its doors to the public in June 1902, distributing a manifesto in Italian and Hebrew (or Yiddish?) on the occasion.

A series of similar ventures followed: a Social Studies Club was launched in Alexandria by young Jewish anarchists in 1903 and a Libertarian Studies Room (*Sala di studi libertari*) the following year in Cairo.[36] Three years later a committee of Europeans, local Jews and Egyptians invited "all workers and friends of justice" to help establish an International Reading Room which would

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[32] A full history of political violence in Egypt has yet to be written. Existing studies take the assassination of Prime Minister Butrus Ghali in 1910, an action possibly inspired by anarchist tactics but carried out by a nationalist, as their starting point. See Donald M. Reid, "Political Assassination in Egypt, 1910–1954", *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 15: 4, 1982, 625–651; Malak Badrawi, *Political Violence in Egypt 1910–1925: Secret Societies, Plots and Assassinations*, Richmond: Curzon, 2000.

[33] AIE no. 86 (1900–1904) Anarchici, 1899 Processo in Alessandria d'Egitto contro diverti anarchici.

[34] See, for example, Lord Cromer's telegram which refers to alleged rumours of Italian anarchists discussing the assassination of the Khedive (FO 78/5090, 7 Oct. 1900, no. 10). For various Italian concerns, see AIE b. 86 (1900–1904) Anarchici.

[35] Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 282.

[36] AIE b. 85 (1900–1904) Parrini Ugo Ucilio.

hold "scientific, philosophical, political and social works in every language."[37] Other associations moved beyond the reading room and stressed specific aspects of libertarian thought. Atheist Clubs (*Cercles Athées*) were set up both in Cairo and Alexandria while a section of Free Thinkers (*Libres penseurs*), with a membership of more than two hundred, was organised in Alexandria.[38]

The local anarchist press aimed for a larger audience. After the false start of 1877, the appearance in Alexandria of the bilingual *La Tribuna Libera/ Le Tribune Libre* heralded a renewed period of activity in October 1901.[39] Announcing itself as an "International organ for the emancipation of the Proletariat", *La Tribuna* sought nothing less than the "complete emancipation of moral-political-economic and social slavery" of the workers of the world.[40] In the course of the seven issues that appeared before the end of the year, it set an example for the radical press that followed, featuring articles on anarchist thought, local and international news of the movement, extracts from noted writers such as Leo Tolstoy, and a series on education by Dutch anarchist, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis.

Over the next decade, a series of newspapers and periodicals took up different aspects of the anarchist program. In Alexandria the weekly *L'Operaio* (1902–03) promoted anarcho-syndicalism, focusing on issues of workers' associations, education and public health. In response, *il Domani* ("Tomorrow") (1903) in Cairo adopted a stridently libertarian tone. *Lux!* ("Light!") (1903) a fortnightly literary journal presented extended discussions of anarchist theory and practice, while the Alexandrian weekly, *Risorgete!* ("Rise Again!") (1908– 1910), promoted a strong anti-clerical line.[41] In 1908 the appearance of *O Ergatis* ("The Worker"), "an organ for the emancipation of women and the worker", provided for a Greek language readership. Although contrasting in styles and specific orientation, particularly true of *il Domani* and *L'Operaio*, these publications were expressive of the ideological and linguistic diversity of the Egyptian movement. From 1909, a more coordinated anarchist press was forged from the consensus of the conference in Alexandria that year.[42] In the succeeding years two newspapers, *L'Idea* (1909–1911) and *L'Unione* (1913–14), both co-edited by committees in Cairo and Alexandria, spoke to a broad audience with articles in Italian, French and Greek.

Despite its polyglot character, the anarchist press in Egypt does not appear to have included an Arabic language newspaper.[43] Nevertheless, anarchism (usually referred to as *fawdawiyya* in Arabic) had regularly featured in the mainstream Arabic newspapers since the 1890s, usually in reporting the activities of the movement abroad. At the same time modernist journals such as *al-Muqtataf* and *al-Hilal* carried articles discussing the origins and development of anarchist thought and practice, sometimes in the context of the broader socialist movement.[44] From 1897 *al-Jami'a al-Uthmaniyya* engaged with socialist ideas while a review, *al-Mustaqbal* ("The Future"),

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[37] AIE b. 107 (1904–1906) Stampa Anarchica, Ministry of Interior memos, 6 June, 3 Sept. 1907.

[38] AIE b. 120 (1909–1910) Circolo Ateo.

[39] In February 1877 the newly established Alexandria section of the International had published a newspaper, *Il Lavoratore*, that was quickly closed down by the authorities. For this and a useful but incomplete listing of anarchist newspapers published in Egypt, see Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, 81–88.

[40] *La Tribuna Libera* 20 Oct. 1901.

[41] This is probably the same as the weekly *Risveglio Egiziano* mentioned in a Ministry of Interior memo, AIE b. 111 (1907–1908), Anarchici, Min of Interior memo, 16 Feb. 1908.

[42] AIE b. 120 (1909–1910) Stampa sovversiva, 'Perche siamo anarchici—Che cosa vogliamo'.

[43] Some short Arabic language texts, mostly advertisements, appeared in *L'Operaio*.

[44] See, for example, 'al-Ishtirakiyyun wa al-fawdawiyyun', *al-Muqtataf* 18 no. 11 (Aug. 1894), 721–729 and 18 no. 12 (Sept. 1894) 801–807 (a short series on socialists and anarchists).

which appeared in 1914 but was soon closed down by the authorities, featured the work of Salama Musa and Shibli Shumayyil, two Egyptian writers influenced by anarchist ideas.[45]

As the international anarchist press served to promote the ideas and sustain the identity of the movement globally, so did its local counterpart on a smaller scale. The effectiveness of this press in promoting the ideas of the movement has to be qualified by two important considerations. The first is the literacy of the target audience. This was much higher amongst the foreign working class with, for example, sixtyseven percent of Italians and almost sixty percent of Greeks being able to read and write, than for native Egyptians, where only thirteen per cent of men and about one per cent for women, were literate.[46] However, access to newspapers was not strictly limited to the literate since the common practice of reading newspapers out aloud in cafés allowed for the transmission of ideas to the unlettered.

Affordability was also a limiting factor. Although anarchist newspapers suffered from regular financial difficulties in production, they were competitively priced. *La Tribuna Libera, L'Indipendente* ("The Independent") and *L'Unione* (The Union") all sold for five *millièmes*

(half a *piastre*) a copy. This was the same price as the mainstream Arabic language papers at a time when the daily wage for highly skilled (usually European) labour was between twenty and forty piastres and for unskilled (most often Egyptian) workmen, about eight piastres.[47] *L'Operaio*, unusually for an anarchist newspaper, carried advertising and sold for only one millième. Other anarchist publications, particularly *numeri unici* (one-off issues), were often free or by voluntary donation. At the other end of the scale *Lux!* which in any case was a more literary production was expensive at two piastres a copy. Circulation figures are difficult to establish but we know that the first issue of *La Tribuna Libera* was one thousand copies (six hundred of which were sent abroad).[48]

While the press served to connect its readership through dissemination of news and analysis, the anniversaries of important political events offered an opportunity for a public commemoration of the radical past and celebration of its principles. On these occasions, posters, leaflets and flyers were printed, posted in the streets and distributed to the public by different anarchist groups, promoting the values of their cause and their aspirations for the future. Initially the most fêted of these days was 18 March, the anniversary of the Paris Commune of 1871, publicly celebrated in Egypt by 1889.[49] In time it would be challenged by May Day in marking the international solidarity of workers.[50] For Italian anarchists the occasion of 20 September, the anniversary of the capture of Rome and the completion of Italian unification in 1870 provided a specific occasion to contemplate a sense of lost opportunity.[51]

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[45] For a fuller discussion, see Donald M. Reid, "The Syrian Christians and Early Socialism in the Arab World", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 5, 1974, 177–193.

[46] Quoted in Robert Tignor, *State, Private Enterprise, and Economic Change in Egypt, 1918–1952*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984, Tables A.1–2 and Donald M. Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt*, Cairo: AUC Press, 1991, 113. The figures are taken from the 1917 census (for Italians and Greeks) and the 1907 census (for Egyptians) on the basis of number of literate persons per 1,000 persons over five years. The rate for Jews, a group that included both Egyptians and non-Egyptians, was almost forty-four per cent (1907).

[47] Joel Beinin and Zachary Lockman, *Workers on the Nile: Nationalism, Communism, Islam, and the Egyptian Working Class, 1882–1954*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1988, 39.

[48] AIE b. 87 (1900–1904) Anarchici, La Tribuna Libera, Memo 16 Nov. 1901.

[49] PI b. 41, 1890 Alessandria, Alexandria to Rome, 13 May–April 1890. The 14 July had served as the occasion of a public conference and march in 1881: Bettini, Bibliografia dell'anarchismo, 305.

[50] The earliest attested celebration of 1 May is PI b. 41, 1891 Alessandria, Alexandria to Rome, 18 April 1891.

[51] AIE b. 86 (1900–1904) Anarchici, 25 Sept. 1904.

Other expressions of anarchist sentiment were more spontaneous. In January 1907 a series of public protests gathered in Alexandria and Cairo to oppose the rumoured deportation of three Russian revolutionaries.[52] Two years later anarchist hostility towards religious authority and political tyranny came together dramatically when the Spanish government arrested Francesco Ferrer i Guàrdia, a noted anarchist thinker, educator and founder of the Modern School movement in Spain, on charges of taking part in the anti-conscription uprising. News of the action spread quickly and prompted widespread protest internationally. In Alexandria a Pro-Ferrer committee was formed and hundreds of copies of a *numero unico* published on 30 September 1909 to publicise the case. On 4 October a series of speakers denounced the actions of the Spanish government at a meeting at the Free Popular University. Despite these and other protests Ferrer was executed in Barcelona some days later but he soon acquired martyr status. In Cairo later that month a number of anarchist organisations held a pro-Ferrer protest march.[53] By the end of the year a plaque in Ferrer's memory was set up in Alexandria and on 1 May the following year, the cry was heard: "Vive 1 May, Vive liberty, Vive Francesco Ferrer".[54]

Popular education

The outrage expressed at the execution of Ferrer was not simply a protest against state tyranny but recognition of his status as an advocate for secular education, an important vehicle for social emancipation in anarchist thought. Indeed, it was in the cause of public education that anarchists in Egypt mounted their most ambitious project, the Free Popular University (*Università Popolare Libera*, henceforth UPL) in Alexandria in 1901.[55] Planned in the early months of that year and galvanised by the leadership of Galleani, the UPL was inaugurated in May with the aim of providing free evening education to the popular classes. The event was covered at length in the local European and Arabic language press which endorsed enthusiastically its objectives and drew widespread support from across the full range of Alexandrian society.

Although inspired by a European model (the first UPLs had opened in Italy over the previous twelve months), the UPL in Egypt developed its own specific program and character. Ideologically it applied a more radical vision than the Italian UPLs, which had close ties to the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), in offering classes in the humanities and the latest advances in science to workers and providing individual lectures on progressive social issues, such as workers' associations and the position of women in society. The UPL in Alexandria was also more internationalist by virtue of catering to a culturally and linguistically diverse community. Drawing on the services of voluntary teachers, classes were given in a number of languages, principally Italian and French, but also in Arabic and other languages. As one Alexandrian daily newspaper noted, "All

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[52] *Egyptian Gazette* 19 Jan., 21 Jan. 1907; al-Ahram 19 Jan., 26 Jan. 1907.

[53] For a hostile report, see 'A Ferrer Fiasco', *Egyptian Gazette*, 18 Oct. 1909.

[54] AIE b. 126 (1911) Anarchici, Ministry of Interior Memo, 9 Dec. 1909 (plaque); AIE b. 120 (1909–1910), Ministry of Interior Memo, 4 May 1910 (May Day). The Ferrer affair would be taken up in the local Greek and Arabic language press, as well as the theatre: see Ilham Makdisi, "Theater and Radical Politics in Beirut, Cairo and Alexandria", Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 2006.

[55] For a more detailed discussion, see Anthony Gorman, "Anarchists in Education", 303–320. A similar project planned in Cairo was quickly targeted by the authorities and abandoned at the end of 1901.

the languages that sound in the mouths of the happy fellow drinkers of the waters of the Nile serve as a vehicle in lectures of different university teachers".[56]

Despite this propitious beginning, the radical nature of the UPL soon attracted hostility. Concerned at its political character the Italian consular authorities moved quickly to institute legal proceedings against a UPL lecturer, Dr Curti-Garzoni, after he had made certain remarks in class regarding the recent assassination of the Italian king, Umberto I. The action, while attracting some public criticism, effectively undermined the momentum behind the UPL and witnessed a quick shift in attitude in some quarters. Formerly supportive, *al-Ahram* now accused the university of being based on "depraved principles" and standing "revealed for its disgrace and emptiness".[57] Within a year reliably bourgeois elements had wrested control of the UPL from its anarchist founders and proceeded to transform it into a vocational college that, among other things, taught shorthand, accountancy and languages. Its brief life as a revolutionary project notwithstanding, the UPL marks an important moment for anarchism in Egypt and almost certainly served as an inspiration to Egyptian nationalists who would establish the Higher Schools Club (*Nadi al-madaris al-ʿulya*) in 1905 which similarly put educational means to political purpose.[58]

Anarcho-syndicalism and labour

Anarchism in Egypt would have its most significant impact on the development of the labour movement. With the emergence of a new working class of critical mass at the end of the 19th century, anarchosyndicalism, in contrast to the anti-organisationalists, held that formal collective organisation was the necessary instrument of social revolution and began to assert itself as a force. Employing a discourse that stressed the virtues of solidarity, workers' rights, and justice, it played a central role in organisation and formulation of the strategy and tactics of working class militancy in resisting the predations of capital.

Organised labour was far from new in Egypt. Guilds had been an integral part of the traditional Ottoman order, serving as guardians of the trade, regulating entry into the profession, maintaining standards of workmanship, controlling competition and providing a framework for mutual aid.[59] The modernisation program of Muhammad Ali in the first half of the 19th century and the progressive incorporation of Egypt into the international capitalist system in the second had begun to undermine established social and economic structures. Greater foreign trade, the demand and import of large amounts of goods and the inflow of capital invested in land companies, agriculture and local industry in Egypt significantly changed the economic and social role of guilds and the character of the working class.[60]

As has already been indicated, an important part of this process was the establishment of a local foreign workforce alongside native Egyptian labour. Historians of the Egyptian labour

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[56] 'Università Popolare Libera', *L'Imparziale* 17–18 Nov. 1901.

[57] 'al-Kulliya al-hurra', *al-Ahram* 13 July 1901.

[58] Egyptian nationalist interest in the UPL is attested by the considerable coverage given to it in the pages of al-Liwa', and by the participation of its correspondent, Muhammad Kalza, in the official opening. On the Higher School Club, see Anthony Gorman, *Historians, State and Politics in Twentieth Century Egypt: Contesting the Nation*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, 82; ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Rafiʿi, Mustafa Kamil, *Baʿth al-haraka al-wataniyya.* Cairo, 1939, 192–195.

[59] For a short, useful discussion, see Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, 16–19. For a more detailed analysis on guilds in Egypt during this period, see Juan Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East*, Princeton University Press, 1993, 164–189, and John T. Chalcraft, *The Striking Cabbies of Cairo: Crafts and Guilds in Egypt, 1863–1914*, Albany NY: State University of New York, 2005.

[60] For some discussion on developments in finance during this period, see Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the*

movement, primarily concerned with its contribution to the national movement, have tended to stress the differences between the European and foreign worker above any common basis for action.[61] While acknowledging in varying measure the positive role played by foreign workers in inspiring the organisation of Egyptian workers, they have tended to emphasize the factors that militated against such cooperation: the ethnic character of some occupations, the differential rates of pay, and the legal advantages foreign workers enjoyed under the Capitulations.[62]

This characterisation of the relationship between these two groups requires some revision. While the factors noted clearly played some part in determining the pattern and configuration of labour activism, the record shows a clear and sustained evidence of cooperation and collaboration between the elements within these two groups that took off at the very beginning of the new century. As Lockman has rightly pointed out, the native Egyptian working class was not homogeneous, did it function as a single actor nor did it possess a single subjectivity.[63] The same is true of the local foreign working class.[64] Our understanding of the relations between these two groups should therefore not be reduced to a European style of labour organisation in competition with a new emerging Egyptian labour model. It is argued here that a model of collaboration between European and Egyptian workers grounded in an internationalist ethic and universal workers' rights was locally constituted in Egypt during the critical years from the beginning of the 20th century until 1914.

The international or mixed union (in Arabic, *niqaba mukhtalifa*) was the clearest formal expression of common cause between foreign and Egyptian workers and the most obvious vehicle for anarcho-syndicalist militancy. Accepting workers of all nationalities, these unions were established in important trades, such as cigarette workers, tailors, tobacco workers and shoemakers, but they were also set up on a less specific basis, such as the International Union of Workers and Employees (IUWE) formed in Cairo. Meetings and demonstrations reflected the international character of the membership. At a meeting during the tailors' strike in 1901, workers' demands were read out in a number of languages while at the inaugural meeting of the IUWE in 1909 speakers addressed an audience of more than two thousand people on the importance of the collective action and international solidarity in Arabic, French, Greek, Italian and German.[65] Union leadership was similarly international. A committee of fourteen made up of five Greeks, five Egyptians, two Syrians, one Italian and an Armenian, for example, ran the shoemakers union.[66]

In common with existing workers' associations, these international unions provided various welfare services to members but they also represented a break from earlier patterns of labour organisation. They more aggressively championed workers' interests in the battle against employ-

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World Economy, 1800–1914, Methuen: London and New York, 1981, 233–243.

[61] Lockman, 'Imagining the Working Class', 186.

[62] The Capitulations were a series of agreements made between the Ottoman Empire and many European states that granted certain economic and legal privileges to foreign nationals, principally exemption from certain customs duties and the right to be subject to their own national law administered by consular authorities.

[63] Zachary Lockman (ed.), *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East: Struggles, Histories, Historiographies*. State University of New York Press, 1994, 72.

[64] For a fuller discussion, see Anthony Gorman, "Foreign Workers in Egypt 1882– 1914: Subaltern or labour elite?", 237–259 in Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *Subalterns and Social Protest: History from Below in the Middle East and North Africa*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.

[65] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 54 (tailors); *Phos* 7 July, 14 July 1909; *al-Muqattam* 12 July 1909 (IUWE). In other sources, this union is known as the *Association Internationale de coopération pour l'amélioration des classes ouvrières*, AIE b. 120, Ministry of Interior Memo, 4 July, 11 July 1909

[66] *Tilegraphos* 26 Dec. 1901

ers and they also appealed to higher values of international solidarity and universal brotherhood adopting names redolent with ideological aspirations such as *Concord* (tailors), *Progress* (tobacco workers) and *Reform* (shoemakers). They were complemented in this by the resistance leagues *(leghe di resistenza)*, first established in Alexandria amongst printers, tailors and cigarette rollers at the beginning of the decade by the tireless Pietro Vasai, which probably served as a smaller, disciplined core of anarcho-syndicalist practice.[67] In Cairo in 1910 the common purpose and ideological affiliation between these organisations was made particularly clear, when the IUWE, the Ligue Typographique, the Association of Cigarettiers and the International

Federation of Resistance, rented a common premises.[68]

The cigarette rollers union embodied the new militancy of the international unions. Originally set up as a Greek body in Cairo during the 1890s, it accepted membership from rollers of all nationalities just prior to launching the successful strike of 1899–1900 that is regarded as a milestone in industrial militancy in Egypt.[69] The successful out come of this action put the cigarette workers at the vanguard of the new labour movement. However, the peaceful gains of this strike contrasted with the bruising confrontations in December of the following year when police used canes and fire hoses to attack workers. More desperate still was the strike of 1903. At the height of the confrontation, anarchists Ugo Parrini and Nicolas Doumas led the call for a general strike, urging workers to fight violence with violence.

Ultimately the strike collapsed as employers brought in other Egyptian and Syrian workers as strike breakers and successfully split the united front by branding the industrial dispute an ethnic conflict. Cigarette workers would take some years to recover from the blow. When they did reorganise in 1908, the two cigarette unions, the Matossian Union and the *Ligue Internationale des Ouvriers Cigarettiers et Papetiers du Caire*, further expanded their membership by accepting all cigarette workers, not only rollers.

By the end of the first decade of the century, the anarcho-syndicalist international union had emerged as a significant industrial and indeed moral force. As one Cairene newspaper confidently announced,[70]

> Happily in Cairo some years ago, a movement began to be observed of the fraternisation of the working classes, and after not many years the city of the Caliphs will be one of the first socialist centres on account of its international character.

The optimism may have been overstated but the sentiment expressed captured the confidence of a broad movement within the working classes based on universalist principles in which anarchists and syndicalists had played a leading role.

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[67] AIE b. 88 (1900–1904) 29 May 1902.

[68] AIE b. 126 (1911) Anarchici, 'Movimento anarchico in genere', Memo 8 Aug. 1910'

[69] For a fuller discussion of these events, see Gorman, 'Foreign Workers in Egypt', 245–249. Among the strike leadership Kordatos identifies the Vourzonides brothers as anarchists and Solomon Goldenberg (known from other sources to be an anarchist), Yiannis Kordatos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ergatikou kinimatos*, Athens: Boukoumani, 1972, 174n.

[70] Phos 11 March 1909.

Competing orientations

Despite the successes of the international unions, the call for workers of all nationalities to unite and defend their interests did not go unchallenged. The closest ideological rivals were the socialists with whom anarchists shared an anti-capitalist program but disagreed on the manner and the rationale it should be pursued.[71]

One source of competition for the loyalty of foreign workers was the local national associations found in the foreign communities that provided welfare services and a social life for members within a communitarian or homeland orientation. These were particularly significant in the Greek community where the power of the bourgeois oligarchy in funding and controlling community institutions maintained a patron-client relationship with workers.[72]

However, the most significant challenge to the internationalist aspirations of syndicalism in respect of Egyptian workers was the emerging nationalist movement. Initially, workers had not figured in the thinking of young nationalists like Muhammad Farid, who in the mid1890s had regarded signs of militant labour as part of a "European disease" and alien to the Egyptian context.[73] Over the next decade and a half as the phenomenon of strikes increased and the power of the labour movement became clear, the nationalist position shifted.[74] In 1909 the Watani Party openly backed the formation of the Manual Trades Workers Union (MTWU), a diverse body of Egyptian urban workers, recognising both the need to constitute a broader national community and the political potential of the worker in the struggle against the British occupation.[75]

Well before this time, anarcho-syndicalists had been aware of the need to engage with the native Egyptian worker. This was most easily done in the framework of the international union; however the structure of the working class, where many occupations were for all practical purposes practised only by Egyptians, meant that their formation was often not feasible. Nevertheless, some anarchists and particularly the editors of *L'Operaio* even as they recognised certain difficulties highlighted the importance of promoting the necessity of labour organisation and militancy to the native proletariat. When the cab drivers in Alexandria went on strike in April 1903, the paper heralded this as the beginning of a genuine Egyptian militancy.[76] The editors of *L'Unione* similarly stressed the shared interests of European and Egyptian workers, emphasizing they had to unite to successfully defend their interests because "capital is our common enemy". More than that they pointed to the universal condition of workers:[77]

> Labour has no frontiers or language. Therefore we make no issue of nationality, of religion, of race. All feel the same needs, all suffer the same grief; all have one single aspiration: their own well-being, which cannot be other than the result of the common well-being.

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[71] The socialist movement in Egypt before 1921 awaits its own study. After the breakup of the First International in the 1870s it probably maintained a continuous if uneven existence in the ensuing decades. Under the Second International established in 1889 socialists promoted social democratic politics and were a significant force among Italian and possibly other workers in the decade or so before the outbreak of the First World War.

[72] Anthony Gorman, "Foreign Workers in Egypt 1882–1914", 254.

[73] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 55.

[74] For the nationalist 'discovery' of the working class, see Lockman, "Imagining the Working Class", 157–190.

[75] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 67–72.

[76] 'La Coscienza Indigena' *L'Operaio* 11 April 1903.

[77] *L'Unione* 13 July 1913.

Egyptian nationalists, however, articulated quite a different political vision and in the years after the formation of the MTWU contended with anarcho-syndicalists for the support of the working class in Egypt, employing both discursive and organisational tactics, and drawing on nativist and ethnocentric appeals to splinter the internationalist labour movement. In this, they followed the employers during the cigarette strike of 1903.

One arena in which these conflicts were played out was the International Printers League of Cairo. Established at the beginning of the century by Italian anarcho-syndicalists, the membership of the union was predominantly Italian but included Greek and Egyptian members. In 1909 a splinter group of Italian workers sought to break away from the union to form an Italian Mutual Assistance Society. The anarchist *l'Idea* came out strongly against the move branding it a "regression" that rejected "brotherhood and international solidarity".[78] For a time, a split appears to have been averted but in February 1911 some parting of the ways between Egyptian and European printers seems to have occurred.[79] In the years that followed, anarcho-syndicalist forces were weakened by the government campaign of deportation waged against activists, Pietro Vasai being among them.[80] Yet, by 1915 now under the leadership of Italian anarchist Giuseppe Pizzuto, Europeans and Egyptians were again accepted as members of the union on equal terms.[81]

The postwar order

Britain declared Egypt a protectorate following the outbreak of the World War I and for the next four years oversaw a policy of clamping down on all political activities, interning nationalists, surveilling or deporting foreign anarchists and closing down newspapers. With the end of hostilities in 1918 Egyptian nationalists renewed their calls for the immediate evacuation of British forces and Egyptian independence. The British government sought to resist these demands, a policy that detonated a series of protests across the country, known as the 1919 Revolution, which saw nationalists fronting a broad-based coalition of forces.

The same year witnessed an explosion in industrial unrest unleashed after the enforced moderation of the war years. A strike in the Suez Canal in May was the prelude to an outbreak of strikes in August by Egyptian and foreign workers in Cairo and Alexandria and the establishment of a large number of new labour syndicates. Anarchosyndicalists again played a leading part in this movement. Pizzuto at the head of the printers' union led the move to set up a Bourse de Travail in Cairo in the summer of 1919 before being deported in September. In February 1921, after considerable planning the General Confederation of Labour (*Confédération Générale du Travail*, CGT, or *Ittihad al-niqabat al-ʿam*) was established in Alexandria with anarchist

Joseph Rosenthal as one of its chief organisers.[82] The CGT brought together almost three thousand mostly foreign workers from twentyone unions, but it was a measure of Rosenthal's stand-

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[78] *L'Idea* 1 May 1909.

[79] Amin ʿIzz al-Din, *al-Tabaqa al-ʿamila al-misriyya mundhu nashatiha hatta thawrat 1919*, Cairo: Dar al-shaʿb, 1967, 123.

[80] Kordatos, *Istoria tou Ellinikou Ergatikou Kinimatos*, 175–176.

[81] FO 407/185, no. 155 Allenby to Curzon, Ramleh 31 Aug. 1919.

[82] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 111–113, 139. The names of both of these organisations owed a clear debt to French anarcho-syndicalism.

ing at the time that he was visited privately later in the year by Mustafa al-Nahas, a leading member of the Wafd and future Egyptian Prime Minister.[83]

These years also saw a reconfiguration of radical political forces. In August 1921 the Egyptian Socialist Party (ESP), the precursor of Egyptian Communist Party, was established. Based in Cairo with branches in Alexandria and the Delta, it claimed a party membership of fifteen hundred by late 1922 drawn from both Egyptian nationals and resident foreigners. Its program was anti-imperialist, calling for the liberation of the Nile Valley (Egypt and the Sudan), and anti-capitalist. Its economic and social principles owed a significant debt to anarchism even if it did embrace parliamentary politics.[84] According to one of its leaders, the party aimed

> to defend their [i.e. workers'] interests in parliament and elsewhere, and to work to force the government to issue social laws to protect the workers, who were left to the mercy of capitalism and its tyranny.[85]

These words of Rosenthal, a key figure in radical politics of more than twenty years, suggest that many of those who had been anarchist militants before the war were now drawn to the party as the main vehicle for the radical challenge to the traditional political order.[86] In this they finally agreed with their close rivals, the socialists with whom they had been doing battle and making common cause since the 1880s.

The early life of the ESP was marked by internal conflicts over policy and strategy prompting the departure of more moderate members. One contentious issue was the question of affiliation with the Communist International (Comintern). Following contacts with Moscow, a general meeting of the ESP in January 1923 accepted the necessary twenty one conditions for Comintern membership and the Communist Party of Egypt (ECP) was formally established, adopting a program that called for the end of the Capitulations and equal pay for Egyptian and foreign workers.[87] Additional conditions were required, among them the expulsion of Rosenthal as an "undesirable" element, very probably because of his anarchist past, and possibly others with a similar record.

In 1922, the bitter dispute between Egyptian nationalists and Britain was temporarily settled by the British decision to unilaterally grant Egypt self-rule even if it reserved certain important powers to itself. At the beginning of 1924, Sa'd Zaghlul at the head of the Wafd, became the head of Egypt's first popularly elected government under the new constitution. He soon launched a sustained attack against the ECP and other radical opposition. For the rest of the 1920s and into the early 1930s communists, anarchists, socialist and radical nationalists were subject to a campaign of government repression. During this time anarchists themselves maintained a separate presence in Egypt but more research is required to establish how significant the movement was during this period.[88] While its role was clearly diminished compared to its pre-war position, anarchist thought and international syndicalism continued to exercise some influence. In

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[83] FO 141/779/9065 Cairo 1919–1921 Bolshevism, Report on Rosenthal and Edward Zaidman.

[84] Ismael and Rifa'at El-Sa'id, *Communist Movement in Egypt*, 21–22. Salama Musa's comment that the party was first called the Anarchist Party (*al-hizb al-ibahi*) also suggests a strong debt to the anarchist tradition, Salama Musa, *Tarbiyya Salama Musa*, Dar al-Mustaqbal, 1958, 203.

[85] Ismael and Rifa'at El-Sa'id, *Communist Movement in Egypt*, 15, 17.

[86] Though certainly Jewish, Rosenthal's geographic origins are unclear. Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 130 assert he was born in Palestine but he has variously been described as Russian and Austrian.

[87] Ismael and El-Sa'id, *Communist Movement in Egypt*, 21–22.

[88] The Italian and Greek governments were concerned about the activities of Egyptian anarchists both at home

the 1930s the Atheists Circle and *Les Libres Penseurs* continued to operate in Cairo, attracting a new generation of socialists and free thinkers, some of whom would play a part in the revived left of the 1940s.[89] By this time the labour movement drew ideological support from the communist movement and the Muslim Brotherhood but it nevertheless still owed something to its anarcho-syndicalist roots.

Anarchists and Egyptian nationalism

It was not only in the competition for the loyalties of workers that anarchists clashed with nationalists. There was a much more fundamental ideological gulf between the two movements. As Insabato had made clear,[90]

> … we do not love religious fanaticism but we find that those who wish to substitute religious fanaticism with that of fatherland, nationality, caste or class make progress go backwards.

Yet despite their profound differences nationalism and anarchism did share a common enemy, imperialism, and on more than one occasion became *de facto a*llies in opposing it. Perhaps the earliest example of this was in 1882 when Malatesta and his companions joined Urabi's forces to resist the British, less to assist the nationalist cause per se than to take advantage of the opportunity the situation offered for social revolution.[91] For its part when the Watani Party embraced the labour movement, it nevertheless recognised the importance of allying with foreign workers and urged Egyptian workers during the tram strike of 1911 to, "Unite and strengthen yourselves and increase your numbers through combination and through unity with the European workers, your comrades".[92]

This confluence of political interest was repeated more forcefully during the 1919 Revolution when nationwide agitation against continued British rule and syndicalist activity between foreign and Egyptian labour worked together to improve working conditions.[93] Nationalists were also influenced by the strategies and tactics of anarchism at home and abroad. The likelihood of the UPL influencing nationalist education policy has been mentioned. It seems clear the anarchist organisation had influence on nationalist political activity more generally as well.[94]

and abroad. See, for example, the list of antifascists, anarchists and socialists in Marta Petricioli, Oltre il Mito, *L'Egitto degli Italiani (1917– 1947)*, Milan: Mondadori, 486−489.

[89] Interview with Yusuf Darwish, a communist lawyer and activist from the 1940s who attended these associations in the mid-1930s.

[90] Enrico Insabato, 'Le Idee Avanzate in Egitto (II)', *Lux*!, 37.

[91] The action was later recalled with pride, *Il Processo degli Anarchici*, Alexandria, Cairo 1899, 55. For anarchists at Tel al-Kabir, see PI b. 41, 6 and 20 Oct. 1882.

[92] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 71 (quoting *al-Liwa'*).

[93] Beinin and Lockman, *Workers on the Nile*, 111−112.

[94] For example, in September 1910, leading Watanist 'Abd al-'Aziz Jawish was reported to be promoting Italian anarchist literature, FO 371/1114, 6−7.

Conclusion

In the fifty years before World War I an anarchist community emerged in Egypt sustained by an expanding Mediterranean network of migration, labour mobility, communications and transport. Initially taken up by elements in the resident Italian community, it was gradually embraced by members of other communities who shared a radical view of social emancipation of social, economic and intellectual life. In the decade and a half before World War I anarcho-syndicalism, typified by the 'international' union, was a leading force in the organisation and development of a militant labour movement. Calling for international solidarity among all workers, it adapted with little effort to a society characterised by ethnic and religious pluralism and articulated an anticapitalist, anti-nationalist discourse as it did battle with nationalist and other forces in seeking the support of the popular classes in Egypt. As a libertarian movement, anarchists may have had a less definable but still significant impact, along with socialists and liberals, on the advancement of secular thought in Egyptian intellectual life.

Despite these successes, the anarchist movement faced considerable difficulties in Egypt. The coercion of the state through a sustained campaign of surveillance, prosecution and occasionally deportation no doubt hampered the movement as did its characterisation by the authorities as a group of dissolute, political adventurers promoting an alien ideology. More than this, however, the achievement that anarchists had made in formulating an anti-capitalist discourse, in calling for social emancipation and articulating the consciousness of workers would from the beginning of the 1920s, be appropriated by other forces, chiefly the Egyptian Communist Party and the Egyptian national movement.

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Revolutionary Syndicalism, Communism and the National Question in South African Socialism, 1886–1928

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This chapter examines the manner in which anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists confronted the national question in South Africa, particularly during the 1910s, the period of unquestioned syndicalist hegemony on the revolutionary left. The national question has been perhaps the single most important issue facing labour and the left in South Africa. It centres on two main elements: the deep racial and national divisions in the country, and the national oppression of the African, Coloured and Indian majority. Both elements were deeply rooted in its colonial history, but also tightly entangled in its modern economy, as will be discussed later.

I argue that the local anarchists and syndicalists maintained a principled opposition to racial discrimination and oppression, and a principled commitment to the creation of a multiracial anti-capitalist, anti-statist movement. These two positions constituted the irreducible core of the libertarians' approach to the national question—a distinctive approach that differed in critically significant ways from the later, Communist, "national-democratic" approach (of which more below).

However, it is important to distinguish between two key expressions of this approach, which had different tactical and practical implications. The first may be termed abstract-internationalism: this opposed popular prejudice as well as official discrimination, but failed to take a crucial step of combining this principled position with *active*, and *specific*, efforts to mobilise African, Coloured, and Indian workers around both their class and national grievances. In practice, this approach was identified with a *de facto* focus on white labour.

The second may be termed the activist-integrationist approach: it developed strategies that moved from analysis and principle to consistent and targeted efforts to *mobilise* African, Coloured, and Indian workers around both class *and* national issues. It enabled, it will be argued, the construction by 1921 of a genuinely multiracial revolutionary syndicalist movement, organised in a network of newspapers, unions and political groups, firmly committed to uniting the local working class to struggle simultaneously against the specific national oppression of the African, Coloured and Indian majority, and the capitalist exploitation and state domination of the whole working class, African, Coloured, Indian and white.
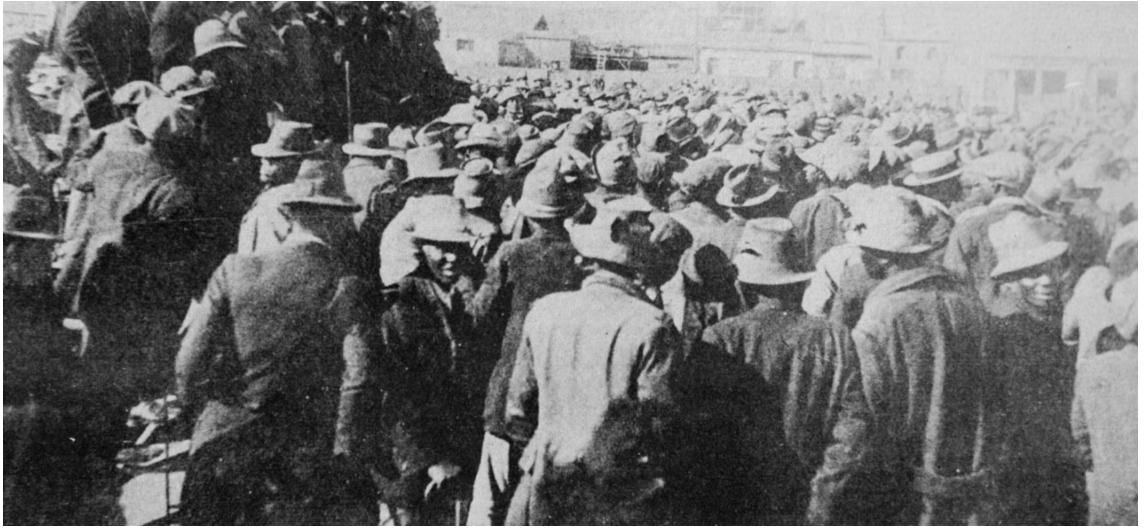
Fig. 1. African workers attend a rally in Johannesburg, addressed by members of the Industrial Workers of Africa, the International Socialist League and the South African Native National Congress, June 1918.

The vehicle of this combined struggle was usually envisaged as a revolutionary interracial One Big Union on the model of the Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW, or Wobblies): "The key to social regeneration … to the new Socialist Commonwealth is to be found in the organisation of a class conscious proletariat within the Industrial Union",[1] creating an Industrial Republic "administered … democratically by the workers themselves".[2]

The One Big Union was to be the proletarian forge in which a common society embracing all, regardless of colour, would be created. The aim of the working class revolution was not to constitute an independent national *state*. It was to overcome national and class inequality through the working class battle to constitute a self-managed libertarian socialist "Industrial Republic": this would unite the African, Coloured, Indian and white working people, and also form "an integral part of the International Industrial Republic".[3]

Not only did this vision come to dominate the radical left in the 1910s, but it enabled the anarchists and syndicalists to pioneer multiracial left-wing organisation, as well as union work amongst the African people, to work alongside Coloured and African nationalists, and to develop an increasingly sophisticated analysis of—and strategy to resolve—the national question.

While the libertarian movement was pioneered by white immigrant radicals, mainly of British and Jewish origin, the demographic profile of the movement changed radically over time. Thus, the local roll call of anarchists and syndicalist militants includes revolutionary people of colour, like Fred Cetiwe, K.C. Fredericks, Johnny Gomas, Hamilton Kraai, R.K. Moodley, Bernard Sigamoney and T.W. Thibedi, alongside white radicals like W.H. "Bill" Andrews, A.Z. Berman, S.P. Bunting, Andrew Dunbar, Henry Glasse, Wilfred Harrison, H.B. "Barney" Levinson and Ferdinand Marais.

The local syndicalist movement also came to centre on a number of IWW-style unions in the major centres, based amongst people of colour. Anticipated by the practice of South African (SA) General Workers' Union in Cape Town in the first decade of the century (and by the aims of the local IWW formed in 1910), these unions included the Clothing Workers Industrial Union, the Indian Industrial Workers' Union, the Horse Drivers' Union, the Industrial Workers' of Africa, and the Sweet and Jam Workers' Industrial Union in the 1910s. Together they represented several thousand people, and were amongst the very first unions amongst workers of colour. Amongst white workers, the syndicalists had some influence in the Cape Federation of Labour Unions, the shopstewards' and workers' committee movement, and the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU). Political groups that promoted anarchism and syndicalism included the local Social Democratic Federation (SDF), the International Socialist League (ISL), the (separate) Industrial Socialist League (IndSL), and the Socialist Labour Party (SLP).

In the late 1910s, the local syndicalist movement also had a significant impact on formations like the South African Native National Congress (SANNC, 1912, renamed the African National Congress, or ANC, in 1923), and the African Political Organisation (APO, 1902), representing African and Coloured nationalist formations, respectively. Into the 1920s, syndicalist influences

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[1] *The International*, 5 May 1916, "What's Wrong with Ireland", hereafter *Int.*
[2] *Int.*, 21 January 1916, "The Most Effective Means".
[3] *Int.*, 22 February 1918, "Industrial Unionism in South Africa".

would continue within the radical wing of white labour (especially the Council of Action of 1920–1922), the early Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA, 1921), and the (predominantly African) Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU, 1919), which spread from South Africa into neighbouring South West Africa, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia).[4]

This analysis and research goes directly counter to the prevailing interpretation of the early history of the left in South Africa, and of its approach to the national question. Scholarship on these issues remains dominated by the interpretations developed by what I term the "Communist school": writers identified with the CPSA and its underground successor, the South African Communist Party (SACP, f. 1953).

While the Communist school undoubtedly played a key role in pioneering left and labour history in South Africa from the 1940s, it has consistently caricatured the pre-CPSA left. Besides downplaying the achievements of anarchism and syndicalism, it has tended to treat the early left as basically a overwhelmingly white movement that at best viewed "the national oppression of the majority" as "not really very worthy of consideration"[5]—and, at worst, embraced "white supremacy" and a "segregation policy".[6] This is part of a larger interpretation of history—to which we return below—which treats the CPSA/SACP, and the larger Communist International (Comintern), as the unique repository of a revolutionary, socialist, answer to the national question.

Only recently has the history of anarchism and syndicalism started to be taken more seriously,[7] but there has been little in the way of a serious reappraisal of their engagement with the national question.[8] Such a reappraisal not only has significant implications for the interpretation of labour and left history in South Africa, but also enables the recovery of the impressive history of early black socialist radicalism—ironically, a casualty of the Communist school's analysis.

Background: the national question, labour and the left

The area that became South Africa comprised a range of distinctive agrarian societies—English, Afrikaner, and African—in the 1860s, when the discovery of diamonds (1867) in Kimberley, followed by gold (1886) on the Witwatersrand (the "Rand" or "Reef"), precipitated an industrial revolution. Large-scale foreign investment poured in from large European investors seeking new outlets for capital, and by 1913 nearly half the world's total gold output came from roughly fifty

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[4] Now independent Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, respectively.

[5] Jeremy Cronin, 1991, "Origins and 'Native Republic' ", in Colin Bundy (ed.), *The History of the South African Communist Party*, Cape Town: Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies, University of Cape Town, 12.

[6] Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850–1950*, London: International Defence and Aid Fund, [1969] 1983, 192–4, 212.

[7] Besides the work of this writer, there is some material in Jonathan Hyslop, *The Notorious Syndicalist: J.T. Bain, a Scottish rebel in colonial South Africa*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004 (Bain briefly embraced syndicalism in the early 1910s), and Allison Drew, *Discordant Comrades: identities and loyalties on the South African left*, Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2002, especially 20–40. Also of importance are sections of Elaine Katz, *A Trade Union Aristocracy: a history of white workers in the Transvaal and the general strike of 1913*, Johannesburg: Institute for African Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, 1976, and Evangelos Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles in South Africa: the forgotten pages, 1903–1921*, Windhoek and Durban: Collective Resources Publications, 1995.

[8] Thus, the view remains widespread that the CPSA, under pressure from the Comintern, was the first socialist organisation to "put South Africa's pressing social problems, the national, democratic and land questions, at the top of their political programme": Allison Drew (ed.) *South Africa's Radical Tradition: a documentary history, volume one, 1907–1950*, Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press/Buchu Books/ Mayibuye Books, University of the Western Cape, 1996, 22, also 16.

square miles on the Witwatersrand.[9] Less than 15 percent of gold mining shares were held locally in 1913,[10] with mining investments dwarfing all other Western investments in the entire continent.[11] Mining was centralised in a small oligopoly, working closely with state industries and infrastructure: this set the pattern for the industries that followed.

The Union of South Africa was formed in 1910 by British imperialism as a self-governing Dominion. It brought together a multiracial, multinational and polyglot population under a single state, but not on equal terms. The Transvaal and Orange Free State—the Afrikaner republics—were conquered in the brutal Anglo-Boer War (1899– 1902), yet were included as provinces alongside Britain's Cape and Natal colonies. The African polities, such as the Pedi and Zulu kingdoms, which had been conquered in 1879, were included as well, but as subject "Native Reserves". Following World War I, German South West Africa came under South African trusteeship, but was not formally incorporated.[12]

The majority of the country's mine workforce was drawn from the defeated African majority of South Africa and the neighbouring territories (such as Basutoland, Mozambique,[13] and Northern and Southern Rhodesia). The Africans—the indigenous, black, Bantuspeaking population, or "natives" in colonial parlance—had been subject to accelerating processes of white conquest in the 19th century, and held no independent territories by the turn of the century. In 1920, barely half (51 percent) of the African miners were drawn from within South Africa itself: 36 percent came from Portuguese Mozambique, and the remainder from other colonial territories.[14] Most were male migrants who lived in closed hostels ("compounds"), later returning to their rural homesteads, a model of controlled migrant labour pioneered on the mines but emulated in other urban industries.[15]

This cheap and nominally unskilled workforce was effectively indentured by rigid contracts, unlike the skilled miners and artisans, who were initially mainly immigrant, often English-

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[9] Riva Krut, "The Making of a South African Jewish Community", in Belinda Bozzoli (ed.), *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives*, edited by Belinda Bozzoli. Braamfontein, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1988, 135–6. By 1990, South Africa had produced nearly 40 percent of all gold *ever* mined.

[10] Martin Legassick, "South Africa: capital accumulation and violence", *Economy and Society*, 3: 3, 1974, 253–291, 260.

[11] Bill Freund, "The Social Character of Secondary Industry in South Africa: 1915– 1945", in Alan Mabin (ed.), *Organisation and Economic Change*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, 81.

[12] Known as South West Africa, its white population had representation in parliament from 1924. It is today independent Namibia.

[13] Now Lesotho and Mozambique, respectively. The total population in 1911 comprised 4,000,000 Africans (67 percent), 1,276,000 Whites (21 percent), 525,000 Coloureds (9 percent), and 150,000 Indians (2,5 percent), although whites formed half of the urban population in major centres. Ten years later, the urban population was only 1,733,000 out of 6,928,000. See D.J. Kotzé, "Die Kommunistiese Beweging in Suid-Afrika tot die Stigting van die Kommunistiese Party van Suid-Afrika in 1921", Institute for the Study of Marxism, University of Stellenbosch, 1987, 73–4; Lis Lange, *White, Poor and Angry: white working class families in Johannesburg*, Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003, 12, 39, 84; Peter van Duin, "South Africa", Marcel van der Linden and Jürgen Rojahn (eds.), *The Formation of Labour Movements, 1870–1914*, Leiden, New York, Kobenhavn, Koln: Brill, 1990, 640 note 38.

[14] David Yudelman and Alan Jeeves, "New Labour Frontiers for Old: black migrants to the South African gold mines, 1920–85", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 13: 1, 1986, 123–4; also see Peter Alexander, "Oscillating Migrants, 'Detribalised Families,' and Militancy: Mozambicans on Witbank collieries, 1918–1921", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27: 3, 2001, 505–525, 508.

[15] In 1916, sixty Witwatersrand mine compounds housed an average of four thousand men each: Patrick Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity: migrant labourers in Mozambique and South Africa c. 1860–1910*, Johannesburg/Portsmouth NH/London: Witwatersrand University Press/Heinemann/James Currey, 1994, 195–196.

speaking, white workers, drawn largely from across the British Empire.[16] Later including a growing number of Afrikaners, they developed into a permanently urbanised, and free, workforce. By 1913, the Witwatersrand mines employed 195,000 Africans (mainly labourers, but also clerks and security guards), and 22,000 white workers.[17] A further 37,000 Africans worked in domestic service, with 6,000 in factories, workshops and warehouses; there were also 16,500 white workers in building, tramways, printing, electricity and other industries, including 4,500 on the state railways.

Besides ongoing African-white conflicts, boiling over into race riots in some of the multiracial Witwatersrand slums, there were also ethnic divisions amongst the Africans. Compounds were divided on ethnic lines, and there was a degree of occupational segregation underground and a long history of violent inter-ethnic "faction-fights".[18] There were also divisions between the (largely skilled) white immigrants and the (largely unskilled) local Afrikaners, further complicated by substantial East European Jewish immigration. A third of whites were classified as poor or very poor: most were proletarianized Afrikaners, *trekking* to the unfamiliar cities to take "orders like black people" and speak the English of the conquering British.[19]

Free workers in general—the whites, the large Indian population of Natal, and the Coloured group, mainly in the Cape—were concentrated in the cities, terrified of replacement by each other, as well as by the mass of cheap African labour, concentrated at the very bottom of society. The small urban African population (that is, excluding the mining compounds) outside the mines was around 40,000 in 1909 in Johannesburg, the hub of the Witwatersrand; most were South Africans.[20] It lived in a twilight world: faced with segregation and discrimination, it was at the bottom of the local racial hierarchy, yet at the same time also free labour. Compounding all these divisions were issues like language: on the mines, for instance, communication between African and white took place mainly through an impoverished pidgin called *fanakolo*; in 1904, only five percent of Natal Indians were literate in English.[21]

The marginalised African and Coloured middle classes formed and led the early nationalist movements like the SANNC, and the APO. They lived in a situation where cheap African labour formed the bedrock of the mines—as well as state industry, and the growing commercial farming and manufacturing sectors—and where the cheapness of African labour was primarily a function of the blacks' historic incorporation into the country as a subject people: in this sense, local "capitalist relations of exploitation were constructed upon colonial relations of domination".[22]

[16] 85 percent of skilled miners in the 1890 were immigrants; in 1921, more than half of all typesetters, fitters and barbers, and over 40 percent of carpenters and electricians were foreign-born: Elaine Katz, *The White Death: silicosis on the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886–1910*, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994, 65; Freund, "The Social Character of Secondary Industry", 83.

[17] D. Hobart Houghton, *The South African Economy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964, 141.

[18] See, for example, Jeff Guy and Motlatsi Thabane, "Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho miners and shaft-sinking on the South African gold mines", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14: 2, 1988, 257–278; Harries, 121–124; John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875–1940: the impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province*, Blantyre: Christian Literature Association in Malawi, 2000, Chs. 5 and 6.

[19] Sandra Swart, " 'Desperate Men': the 1914 Rebellion and the politics of poverty", *South African Historical Journal*, 2000, 42: 161–175, 172.

[20] Harries, 199; in 1931, over 90 percent of newly arrived African labour on the Witwatersrand, not employed in the mines, was from the Natal and Transvaal provinces: Freund, "The Social Character of Secondary Industry", 83.

[21] Maureen Swan, *Gandhi: the South African experience*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985, 12.

[22] Colin Bundy, " 'Left, Right, Left, Right': the CPSA in the 1930s and 1940s", in Colin Bundy (ed.), *The History of the South African Communist Party*, Cape Town: Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies, University

The Union parliament was restricted to white men, the new British Dominion being founded firmly on a principle of white supremacy. Africans were represented largely through traditional authorities—by indirect rule—or through various advisory structures, but were largely ruled by fiat. In the Cape, however, a pre-existing qualified franchise based was retained into the 1930s. In that province, one-third of white men were disenfranchised in 1909, while Africans and Coloureds comprised 15 percent of the electorate.[23] A similar, albeit far more restrictive, system operated in Natal. In the two northern provinces, race sufficed as a voting qualification.

Labourite and Communist approaches to the national question

On the eve of *apartheid* in 1948—in which Afrikaner nationalists extended the segregation policies of the first four decades of Union— there were two main approaches to the national question on the part of labour and the left.

The first was identified with the mainstream white labour movement, and dated back to the late 19th century: social democracy plus segregation, with welfare and industrial reform running alongside job reservation and preferential employment for whites, urban segregation, and Asian repatriation. Essentially, this "White Labourism" answered the national question by seeking to perpetuate white domination—sometimes softened by a rhetorical support for Africans and Coloureds "developing on their own lines" in reserved areas.

White Labourism was the platform of the union-backed South African (SA) Labour Party launched in 1910.[24] It was also identified with the main union centre, the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF), a loose body claiming 47,001 members in 45 affiliated unions in 1919.[25] White Labourism's roots lay partly in the traditions of the first unions: these were craft bodies formed by immigrants, mainly from the 1880s, and their craft exclusiveness soon blurred into a larger racial exclusiveness; this was carried over into later industrial unions, and was reinforced by fierce class struggles that saw employers pit African and white against one another. The most tumultuous was the great Rand Revolt of 1922—a general strike by white labour that escalated into an armed rebellion, as well as racial clashes—which was directly precipitated by an attempt to replace white miners with African miners. Many elements of White Labourism would be adopted by mainstream Afrikaner nationalism.

The second key approach to the national question was identified with the CPSA from 1928 when—under pressure from the Communist International (Comintern)—it adopted the "Native Republic" thesis. This defined the key task of the party as establishing "an Independent South African Native Republic as a stage towards the Workers' and Peasants' Republic, guaranteeing protection and complete equality towards all national minorities".[26] This approach effectively an-

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of Cape Town, 1991, 32.

[23] David Ticktin, "The Origins of the South African Labour Party, 1888–1910", Ph.D. diss., University of Cape Town, 1973, 42; see also Mohamed Adhikari, *'Let us Live for Our Children': the Teachers' League of South Africa, 1913–1940*, Cape Town/ Rondebosch: Buchu Books/UCT Press, 1993, 48. The total rose to over 21 percent in 1921. While people of colour could not sit in parliament, they could sit in local and provincial governments in the Cape.

[24] South African Labour Party, "Programme of Principles", in D.W. Krűger (ed.), *South African Parties and Policies, 1910–1960: a select source book*, Cape Town: Human and Rousseau, [1910] 1960, 73.

[25] Bernard Hessian, "An Investigation into the Causes of the Labour Agitation on the Witwatersrand, January to March, 1922", MA diss., University of the Witwatersrand, 1957, 6.

[26] Communist Party of South Africa, "Programme of the Communist Party of South Africa adopted at the seventh annual congress of the Party on 1 January, 1929", in Brian Bunting (ed.), *South African Communists Speak: documents*

swered the national question by separating national liberation and socialism into separate stages with distinct strategic tasks, with the first stage aiming at the "bourgeois-democratic" goal of black majorityrule in an independent republic. (The Comintern applied this twostage approach—formal independence first, socialism later—across the colonial and semi-colonial world at this time, also considering it as a programme for the "black belt" region of the United States of America).[27]

There was some disagreement in the CPSA over the concrete implications of the Native Republic. In the first place, the new approach was adopted during Comintern's "New Line" era (1928–1935), which stressed the need to Bolshevise parties by purging unreliable elements, and to end all cooperation with non-communists: revolution was assumed to be imminent.[28] This suggested that the CPSA would lead both stages, if necessary through front organisations. This lent itself, in turn, to the view that the Native Republic would assume a radical character under party control, and so, shift rapidly into socialism—rather like Mao Zedong's and Le Duan's version of two-stage theory.[29]

After the New Line era ended, the approach was abandoned. The party was initially divided over whether the CPSA should lead the first stage of the struggle, or leave that role to the African (or perhaps even the Afrikaner) nationalists.[30] Ultimately, it decided to aim at a "united front" of "all nationalities and all anti-colonialist classes", led by the ANC and fighting for a unitary, democratic and capitalist state with land reform and partial nationalisation.[31] Thus if the two-stage theory had always suggested that the first stage be undertaken by some sort of cross-class nationalist front, this final formulation suggested that this must be embodied in an explicitly nationalist movement for "nationaldemocratic revolution," independent of party control.

The party had, in effect, ultimately reduced itself a support group for the African nationalists, viewing *nationalism* as the true bearer of national liberation, rather than as merely *one* approach to *national liberation*. Thus, the CPSA/SACP—which was in the 1930s and 1940s both numerically larger than the ANC, and dramatically more influential in unions and in black communities—surrendered its energies, and its proclaimed vanguard role, to its weaker nationalist rival.

from the history of the South African Communist Party, 1915–1980, London: Inkululeko Publishers, [1929] 1981, 104. For the Comintern resolution itself, see Executive Committee of the Communist International, "Resolution on 'The South African Question'", in Bunting (ed.), *South African Communists Speak.*

[27] See, for example, Marc Becker, "Mariátegui, the Comintern, and the Indigenous Question in Latin America", *Science and Society*, 70: 4, 2006, 450–479.

[28] Drew, *South Africa's Radical Tradition*, 108.

[29] See Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship: in commemoration of the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Communist Party of China", in Editorial Committee for Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung (ed.), *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, [1949] 1971.

[30] A revealing debate took place in the Cape-based CPSA theoretical review, *Freedom/Vryheid*, in the 1940s: see, *inter alia*, Harry Snichter, January 1941, "A People's Programme", *Freedom/Vryheid*; "G", March 1941, "Short-Term Programme: a critique on comrade Snichter's 'Peoples Programme", *Freedom/Vryheid*; Cape District Committee, March 1941, "The Cape District Committee and the People's Programme", in *ibid.*; East London Group, March 1941, "Comments on 'A People's Programme", in *ibid.*

[31] South African Communist Party, "The Road to South African Freedom", in Bunting (ed.), *South African Communists Speak*, 311, 313–20. See also David Everatt, "Alliance Politics of a Special Type: the roots of the ANC/SACP alliance, 1950–54", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18: 1, 1991, 19–39.

The Communist school analysis of the early left

As the CPSA developed, its leadership naturally wished to chronicle its history and to establish its claims to be "the true vanguard of the workers in the fight for the liberation of South Africa", bathed in the "light of Marxist-Leninist science".[32] As part of this project, the Communist school argued that the pre-CPSA left was comprised of two main currents, often co-existing within the same groups.

The first comprised the proto-Bolsheviks, a minority described as the "Communist nucleus" of "true socialists".[33] This referred to a number of veteran radicals who not only helped found but also played a key role in CPSA. In Communist school texts, these activists are seen to have a sort of instinctive Bolshevism even before the CPSA, supposedly "closely approaching the stand of Lenin".[34] Later, this provided the foundation of the CPSA. The other current comprised, supposedly, everyone else on the early left—the anarchists and syndicalists featuring prominently but, critically, as never more than an annoying minority—and was basically seen as providing a series of object lessons in the errors of "ultra-left" posturing, sectarian ineffectiveness, and abstract dogmatism.

In general, then, the pre-CPSA left was seen as rather a failure, although it contained within itself the germs of the "true vanguard". This was exemplified by its approaches to the national question: the proto-Bolshevik minority advocated "a more strictly 'working class' attitude towards the blacks";[35] the rest, predictably, failed to address the national question adequately. At best, they "ignored" the "revolutionary significance" of equal rights.[36] Viewing "the national oppression of the majority of people in our country" as "not really very worthy of consideration",[37] they "studiously" "evaded the colour issue".[38] At worst, they embraced key elements of White Labourism, and overtly supported segregation and colour bars.[39]

It fell to the proto-Bolsheviks, then, to "pioneer socialist work amongst the black workers", and move "step by step" towards an "appreciation" of the "true nature" of the problem.[40] Despite their great efforts, even these bold pioneers failed. It was only in the CPSA of the late 1920s that the national question was first adequately addressed, when with the "fraternal assistance of the world Communist movement and the inspiration of Lenin's ideas", the CPSA adopted the "Native Republic" thesis.[41] Only then could the party grasp the "revolutionary" character of

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[32] Dedication on frontispiece of Michael Harmel [writing as "A. Lerumo"], *Fifty Fighting Years: the Communist Party of South Africa 1921–71.* London: Inkululeko Publications, 1987 [1971].

[33] Yusuf Dadoo, 1981, "Introduction by Dr Yusuf Dadoo, National Chairman of the South African Communist Party", in Bunting (ed.), *South African Communists Speak*, xv.

[34] Brian Bunting, *Moses Kotane: South African revolutionary*, London: Inkululeko Publications, 1975, 20; Bunting (ed.), *South African Communists Speak*, 48; Harmel, 33–37.

[35] Eddie Roux, *Time Longer than Rope: a history of the black man's struggle for freedom in South Africa*, second ed. Madison: Wisconsin University Press, [1964] 1978, 129.

[36] Harmel, 42.

[37] Cronin, "Origins and 'Native Republic'", 12.

[38] Eddie Roux, *S.P. Bunting: a political biography*, University of the Western Cape, Bellville: Mayibuye Books, [1944] 1993, 74–7; see also Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 129–135; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 139–141, 144–145, 154.

[39] Bunting, *Moses Kotane*, 191–192 .

[40] Bunting, *Moses Kotane,* 20.

[41] Cronin, "Origins and 'Native Republic'", 14; Harmel, 42.

African nationalism, leading to the "fusion" of class struggle and national struggle—in concrete terms, an alliance between the CPSA/ SACP and the ANC, finally established in the late 1940s.[42]

According to this narrative, in short, the left before the CPSA was basically a white movement; it could only indigenise from the late 1920s when it adopted the two-stage approach; and it was the growing understanding of Marxism-Leninism—the achievement, alone, of the CPSA/SACP—that first provided an adequate basis to address the national question. This narrative then points to the rapid recruitment of people of colour into the CPSA in the late 1920s as evidence of the correctness of the Native Republic, and as, supposedly, the first instance of black adherence to a radical socialist position.

Emergent anarchism and syndicalism in South Africa, 1886–1913

These claims are all highly doubtful, as indicated in the opening statements in this chapter, and as will be now demonstrated in the following discussion. The local anarchist tradition may be dated back to the 1880s and the tireless efforts of Henry Glasse. An Englishman born in 1857 in Surat, India, Glasse was involved in radical London circles before moving to Port Elizabeth by the start of the 1880s.[43] This was a thriving port but rapidly losing ground to Cape Town—capital of the Cape Colony, and later the seat of the Union parliament—in the battle for trade with the inland mining centres.[44]

Glasse worked in a range of jobs, including a stint on the Witwatersrand mines, wrote for Peter Kropotkin's *Freedom* in London and the Cape labour press, and engaged with workers through the local Mechanics' Institute, a worker-education centre.[45] In short, he was rather typical of the radical European immigrants who introduced the various socialist trends into South Africa in the late 19th century.[46]

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[42] Bunting, *Moses Kotane*, 186; Jeremy Cronin, "Rediscovering our Socialist History", *South African Labour Bulletin*, 15: 3, 1990, 99–100; Forman, 3 July 1958, quoted in Sadie Forman and Andre Odendaal, "Introduction", in Sadie Forman and Andre Odendaal (eds.)., *Lionel Forman: a trumpet from the rooftops*, London/Cape Town, Johannesburg/ Athens, Ohio: Zed Books/David Philips/Ohio University Press, 1992, xxiv; Harmel, 86, 87–9, 93–4, 96–7; Jack Simon, "Lectures on Marxism-Leninism, Novo Catengue 1977–1979", in edited by Marion Sparg, Jenny Schreiner and Gwen Ansell (eds.), *Comrade Jack: the political lectures and diary of Jack Simons, Novo Catengue,* New Doornfontein/Johannesburg STE publishers/African National Congress, [1977–1979] 2001, 183, also 153.

[43] Max Nettlau, *A Short History of Anarchism*, London: Freedom Press, (1934) 1996, 382; H. Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London*, London/New Jersey,: Croom Helm/Rowman and Littlefield, 1983, 4–5, 7, 46, 70, 145–146, 149; John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse: the lost history of the British anarchists*, London, Toronto, Sydney, New York: Paladin, Grenade Press, 1978, 8–9.

[44] Alan Mabin, "The Rise and Decline of Port Elizabeth, 1850–1900", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 19: 2, 1986, 288–289, 295–298; also see Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995, 11–13, 16–17, 43–6, 129–130.

[45] Henry Glasse, 1901, *Socialism the Remedy: being a lecture delivered in the Mechanics' Institute, Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, by Henry Glasse*, Freedom Press, London, International Institute of Social History library holdings, catalogue no. AN 90/65; Henry Glasse, 6 October 1905, "To Work! To Work! A reply to Brutus", *The Cape Workers Vanguard* (hereafter *CWV.*) and Henry Glasse, 13 October 1905, "To Work! To Work! A reply to Brutus (Concluded)", *CWV.*; [Henry Glasse], NovemberDecember 1905, "International Notes: South Africa", *Freedom* (kindly provided by Marianne Enckell of the Centre for International Research on Anarchism, Switzerland); Nettlau, 262, 382; Oliver, 70 note 34, 46, 70, 145–6, 149.

[46] Cf. the profile of immigrant English, German and Italian radicals developed in Sheridan W. Johns, *Raising the Red Flag: the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914–32*, Bellville: Mayibuye Books, University of the Western Cape, Bellville, 1995, 24–30.

It was in South Africa that Glasse translated a number of key works by Kropotkin; these remain the standard English editions. He also acted as a local distributor of Freedom Press materials, like Errico Malatesta's pamphlets, and Kropotkin's Russian-language paper, *Kleb i Volya* ("Bread and Liberty"), which was sold mainly to local Jewish anarchists.[47] In 1901, Freedom Press published Glasse's *Socialism the Remedy*,[48] and the following year his *The Superstition of Government* was honoured by being jointly published with Kropotkin's *Organised Vengeance, Called "Justice"*.[49] Around this time, he managed to form a Socialist Club, to which he gave his "exposition of Socialism from the Anarchist or Libertarian Standpoint" to a "very good audience".[50] Like Kropotkin, he was very favourably disposed to syndicalism, looking to the "great and final conflict—the General Strike which will also be the Social Revolution".[51]

While Glasse's writings sometimes rested on fairly general and abstract arguments ("Peasant, seize the land; workman, seize the factory"),[52] he was keenly aware of the impact of colonialism, and the *specific* problems faced by Africans as a conquered people. Writing to Kropotkin, he argued:[53]

> I have worked in the mine with them, and lived amongst them in the Cape Colony, and now I am trading with them; and I can assure you, dear comrade, that I would rather live amongst them, than amongst many who call themselves 'civilised'. You can still find amongst them the principle of Communism—primitive Communism …
> I have seen amongst them, such brotherly love, such human feelings, such help for one another that are quite unknown between 'civilised' people …

Glasse's idealisation of pre-capitalist cultures (and ironic play on the Western claim to be "civilised") was linked to a detailed critique of an order that "robbed and ill-treated" the Africans:

> They must not walk on the pavement, but in the middle of the road. They must not ride in cabs or tram, and in the trains there are separate compartments for them, just like cattle trucks. They must have passes *a la* Russia, and are allowed to live only in the 'location', those Ghettos set aside for them. They are not allowed to be on the streets after 9 p.m., in the land that was once their own—their Fatherland!

This outraged critique was a critical step in the application of anarchist working class internationalism to the South African situation. Glasse took a further, crucial, step when he argued for an interracial working class movement with the correct position "in regard to the native and coloured question": race hatred was used to divide and rule.[54] "For a white worker in this South

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[47] Henry Glasse, 6 September 1896, letter to C.M. Wilson, and H. Glasse, 12 December 1900, letter to J. Turner, manager of Freedom, both in Alfred Marsh Papers, International Institute of Social History; [Henry Glasse], "International Notes". On *Kleb i Volya*, see Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967, 54, 61, 63, 84, 107.

[48] Henry Glasse, 1901, *Socialism the Remedy*.

[49] Peter Kropotkin/Henry Glasse, 1902, *Organised Vengeance, Called "Justice"/The Superstition of Government*, Freedom Press, London, International Institute of Social History library holdings, catalogue no. AN 29/1202A.

[50] Henry Glasse, 12 December 1900, letter to J. Turner.

[51] Henry Glasse, 13 October 1905, "To Work! To Work! A reply to Brutus (Concluded)", *CWV*.

[52] Glasse, 1901, *Socialism the Remedy*, 11.

[53] [Glasse], "International Notes".

[54] Wilfred Harrison, 1 July 1910, "Anarchy", *The Voice of Labour*, hereafter *VOL*.

Africa to pretend he can successfully fight his battle independent of the coloured wage slaves—the vast majority—is, to my mind, simply idiocy".[55]

This line of thought was also characteristic of the Cape Town-based SDF. This was founded on May Day, 1904, emerged from amongst skilled white workers, and in 1905, co-organised Cape Town's first May Day with the local Trades and Labour Council.[56] The city had grown dramatically: in 1891, Port Elizabeth's population was 23,000 compared to Cape Town's 79,000; by 1904, the figures were 33,000 to 170,000, respectively.[57] It had been boosted by 70,000 newcomers: 34,000 from Europe, mainly from Britain, but including 9,000 Yiddish-speaking Jews from Eastern Europe; 21,000 Coloureds; 9,000 Africans; 2,000 Afrikaners; and 2,000 Indians.[58] A major port, it benefited from close links to Kimberley and Johannesburg and British military activity, and developed a significant manufacturing and service sector with the aid of access to cheap imported inputs for products like paint and soap.[59]

Port Elizabeth was a largely African and white city, but Cape Town was shaped decisively by the large Coloured population. In the South African context, "Coloured" refers to a category of Westernised, mixed-race, people of colour largely descended from the old Cape's underclasses, and mainly Afrikaans-speaking. In the local racial hierarchy, Coloureds stood above the Africans, but below the dominant whites, although most were wretchedly poor. Not only did the majority of Coloureds live in the western and northern Cape, including Cape Town and Kimberley, but in these regions they formed the clear majority overall. Moreover, the combined Coloured and white population in these areas greatly overshadowed the African population. Africans were only 4 percent of the Cape Town population by 1921,[60] and just 14 percent of the city's industrial workforce in 1924 despite rapid industrialisation.[61]

This demography was quite unique in the Union, and meant that the majority of the Cape Town working class was free labour. While most Coloureds were labourers, there was an important and growing artisan layer,[62] many of whom could vote. There was also a relatively high degree of social integration between Coloured and white: for example, many although not all Cape craft unions admitted Coloureds, quite unlike the situation in other regions.[63] The Cape Federation of Labour Unions (1913, succeeding bodies like the Trades and Labour Council) therefore remained

[55] See, for example, *VOL.*, 26 January 1912, letter from Glasse.

[56] Jack Erasmus, 8 June 1905, "Social Democratic Federation: annual report", *South African News*, press clipping, Max Nettlau Collection, International Institute of Social History; Ticktin, 330.

[57] Bickford-Smith, 11, table 1.

[58] Bickford-Smith, 130–131.

[59] Bickford-Smith, 130; Bill Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders: the Indian working class of Durban, 1910–1990*, Portsmouth/Pietermaritzburg/London: Heinemann/University of Natal Press/James Currey, 1995, 29–31; also see Martin Nicol, "A History of Garment and Tailoring Workers in Cape Town, 1900–1939", Ph.D. diss., University of Cape Town, 70–71.

[60] Debbie Budlender, "A History of Stevedores in Cape Town Docks", Honours diss., University of Cape Town, 1976, 6 table IV.

[61] Nicol, 75.

[62] Ian Goldin, "The Reconstitution of Coloured Identity in the Western Cape", in Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (eds.), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman, 1987, 159; Gavin Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall: a history of South African 'Coloured' politics*, Cape Town, Johannesburg David Philips, 1987, 12, 65–66; Nicol, 19–21.

[63] R.C. Stuart, August 1950, "I Look Back", *Trade Union Bulletin*, 3–4. Also see Bickford-Smith, 164–185; Lewis, 16–17; also see Pieter van Duin, "Artisans and Trade Unions in the Cape Town Building Industry", in Wilmot G. James and Mary Simons (eds.), *The Angry Divide: social and economic history of the Western Cape*, Cape Town, Johannesburg: David Philips, 1989; Duin, "South Africa".

outside the segregationist SAIF, which in turn made few inroads into the northern and western Cape.[64] The Federation was rather small, with sixteen affiliates by 1919, the largest with barely 400 members; it was not more than 6,000 strong.[65] Yet Coloureds faced growing official segregation and popular discrimination from the late 19th century, with low Coloured wages a symptom of a widening divide in the working class movement.[66]

The SDF appears in the Communist school texts as a small church of "evangelical socialists" that ignored issues like race,[67] while supposedly cleaving to the dogmatic Marxism of "Hyndman in England".[68] This is rather an uncharitable, not to mention misleading, description of an organisation that was by any measure one of the most important socialist groups before the CPSA. With a large and often dominant anarchist wing, its achievements included organising interracial unions and unemployed demonstrations, producing the country's first 20th century socialist paper, and being the first left group to have its members jailed for their anti-capitalist beliefs; it also helped found the CPSA itself.

Initially, the SDF was a moderate body, and statist besides, with a reform platform that did not even mention socialism, despite the group's early sympathy for H.M. Hyndman's Marxist SDF in Britain.[69] From this improbable beginning, the group would come to play a key role in the emergence of a strong anarchist current in Cape Town.

In the first place, unlike the Hyndman SDF, its membership was always politically diverse, including "anarchists, reform socialists, guild socialists",70 with the strong "anarchist section" including key figures like "Levinson, Strauss, Hahne, Ahrens and others ... all of European origin".[70] Glasse also linked up with the group, writing for its press.[71] These anarchists played a key role in pushing the organisation to the left, and set its pace; although it was never a purely anarchist formation, it cannot be described in any meaningful way as "Marxist",[72] nor properly understood unless the often dominant anarchist influence is admitted.

In the second place, there was a major conflict amongst the founder members in the first two years: this led the more moderate and statist element to withdraw, and left Harrison, a carpenter, unionist and exsoldier, the key figure in the SDF. Harrison's ascendancy was important not only because of his excellent organising skills, charisma and dynamism, but also because of his

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[64] Lewis, 94–95; Nicol, 93–95.

[65] See G. Giffard, " 'Cutting the Current': Cape Town tramway workers and the 1932 strike", Department of Economic History, University of Cape Town, 1984, 10.

[66] Duin, "Artisans and Trade Unions", 98.

[67] Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 139–140, 142–143.

[68] R.K. Cope, *Comrade Bill: the life and times of W.H. Andrews, workers' leader*, Cape Town: Stewart Printing, [? 1943], 96.

[69] Jack Erasmus, 8 June 1905, "Social Democratic Federation: annual report", *South African News*, press clipping, Max Nettlau Collection; also see Special Correspondent, 6 February 1905, "Capetown's Meeting of Sympathy", *Cape Daily Telegraph*, press clipping in *ibid.*, and James Kier Hardie, 5 May 1908, "In Cape Colony", *The Labour Leader* and James Kier Hardie, 22 May 1908, "South Africa: Conclusions", *The Labour Leader*; Social Democratic Federation, [1904] 1973, "The Cape Town Social Democratic Federation's Fighting Platform, 1904", available as appendix B, I, 2 in Ticktin, 497, Cf. the British SDF: Social Democratic Federation, 1904, *Programme and Rules, as revised at the annual congresses held at Shoreditch Town Hall, London, Easter, 1903, and at St. James's Hall, Burnley, Easter, 1904*, London: Twentieth Century Press, International Institute of Social History library holdings, catalogue no. E 1600/260. 70 Johns, 31.

[70] Wilfred Harrison, *Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa 1903–47*, foreword by Tommy Boydell, Cape Town: Stewart Printing, [? 1947], 16, 118– 119.

[71] For example, *The Cape Socialist Vanguard*, July 1905, includes a lengthy Kropotkin translation by Glasse.

[72] Contra. Cope, 96–7; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 76; Ticktin, 339; Hyslop, *The Notorious Syndicalist*, 194.

deep commitment to anarchism. A "staunch and unwavering class fighter",[73] he was a brilliant speaker who embraced the views of his friend Kropotkin.[74] It was Harrison who first used the word "communism" in the South African press, discussing anarchist-communism.[75] An "inveterate soap-box orator" who breathed "hellfire and brimstone at capitalism" with a "fluent tongue",[76] he told crowds of Africans, Coloureds and whites at SDF rallies that:[77]

> Capitalism was on its last legs ... Fields, factories and workshops were to be owned and controlled by those who worked in them ... Kropotkin had proved that the problem of production had been solved. It now remained only a question of ownership and distribution ... laws—as we know them—will be quite unnecessary.

Even sceptics were impressed by the "forceful and appealing way" he "presented his case", which "might almost have convinced many that the Social and Economic Revolution was about to take place next day, or at the very latest by the end of that week". The SDF's short-lived monthly, the *Cape Socialist*, continued the theme, mixing commentary and notices with lengthy extracts from Kropotkin, courtesy of Glasse.[78]

The SDF set up a bookshop, reading room, refreshment bar, a "Socialist Hall" and reading circle at its first offices in Adderley street, and held Sunday talks at the van Riebeeck statue on the Cape Parade, the central public space; it also hired the City Hall on occasion; there were also SDF events at the "Stone" in Clifton street in District Six, a multiracial but mainly Coloured slum.[79] Both the statue and the Stone provided Hyde Park-style speaker's corners, the former frequented mainly by Coloureds and whites, the latter mainly by Coloureds and Africans. Activities at the Stone were organised via former APO leader, unionist, and SDF sympathiser, John Tobin. Obsessed with using every available platform for propaganda, the SDF, the anarchist Harrison included, stood candidates in elections—without any real intention of taking office if elected.

Major SDF events could attract thousands of people. When the SDF campaigned against World War I, its meetings at the Parade packed the Dock Road from the Flat Iron Building to the Carlton Hotel.[80] Unlike the more segregated public sphere elsewhere, these public events routinely attracted significant numbers of Coloureds, as well as some Africans. As the SDF grew, it relocated to larger offices in Plein and Barrack streets, where it sublet space to unions,[81] ran a

[73] Cope, 96–7.

[74] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 32, 38, 119–120; Wilfred Harrison, 1 July 1910, "Anarchy", *VOL.*

[75] Wessel Visser, "Die Geskiedenis en Rol van Persorgane in die Politieke en Ekonomiese Mobilisasie van die Georganiseerde Arbeiderbeweging in Suid-Afrika, 1908– 1924", Ph.D., University of Stellenbosch, 2001, 217.

[76] Tommy Boydell, *"My Luck was In": with spotlights on General Smuts*, Cape Town: Stewart Printing, n.d., 41.

[77] Tommy Boydell, [? 1947] n.d., "Foreword", to Harrison, *Memoirs*, viii, ix.

[78] The sole surviving issue, named as *The Cape Socialist Vanguard: official organ of the Social Democratic Federation—Cape District*, is in the folder "The Cape Socialist Vanguard: organ of the Forward Labour Movement", mixed up with the *CWV.*, in the serials collection, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam. On the paper, see Harrison, *Memoirs*, 5–6, 9–10.

[79] Erasmus, 1905, "Social Democratic Federation"; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 13. On the "Stone" and Tobin, see Lewis, 18–19, 26–27, 45, 56–57.

[80] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 50–62.

[81] Union resentment of SDF rates (and noise from SDF events) eventually led to the rooms being provided free, a generous subsidy to the unions: *CWV.*, May 1906, "Trades and Labour Council: Friday, April 27".

refreshment bar, and kept a printing press.[82] It provided members with an active social life, with visits to the beach, a choir, and even a few socialist christenings.[83]

The SDF kept its platform open to a range of controversial speakers, like the young Mohandas Gandhi—then emerging as a champion of the local Indians—who at the time "declared himself a Socialist".[84] When James Keir Hardie of Britain's Independent Labour Party toured South Africa in 1908, he was dogged by hostile white crowds incensed at his defence of African and Indian claims.[85] After the Cape Trades and Labour Council fearfully cancelled his reception, it was the SDF who hosted Hardie in an event that he fondly recalled as "far and away the most enthusiastic I had".[86] In 1910, it hosted British syndicalist Tom Mann, another radical who defended people of colour, impressing the APO with his "vigorous appeal to all wage-earners to organise and present a united front".[87]

Across the colour line: the SDF achievement

These actions show up the Communist school claim that the SDF "ignored" race or saw it as a "side issue", or never "in practice" took "steps to organise the non-white worker or to openly propagate racial equality".[88] Identifying with Hardie, and then Mann, strengthened its already favourable reputation amongst Coloureds, but that reputation rested on a deeper opposition to racism. Like Glasse, Harrison viewed racial prejudice as basically caused by capitalism, and as antithetical to working class interests: he was quick to put down the perennial hecklers on this issue.[89]

Alone on the Cape union and left scene, the SDF condemned the draft Act of the Union of South Africa in 1909: its colour bar clauses were "contrary to all Democratic principles, and an insult to the coloured races of South Africa".[90] This aligned it with the APO, then mounting a vigorous campaign against what it viewed as an "un-British" and "retrogressive" bill.[91] While the SDF participated in several of the meetings leading to the founding of the SA Labour Party, it withdrew once a reformist and segregationist platform was adopted.[92] The SDF's unstinting

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[82] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 6.

[83] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 16.

[84] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 36, 143.

[85] See James Kier Hardie, 17 April 1908, "South Africa: in Natal", *The Labour Leader*; Jonathan Hyslop, "The World Voyage of James Keir Hardie: Indian nationalism, Zulu insurgency and the British labour diaspora 1907–1908", *Journal of Global History*, 1, 2006, 343–362.

[86] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 19–22; Hardie, "South Africa: Conclusions".

[87] Quoted in Lionel Forman, [1959] 1992, "Chapters in the History of the March for Freedom", in Forman and Odendaal (eds.), *Lionel Forman,* 43; also see John Philips, "The South African Wobblies: the origins of industrial unions in South Africa", *Ufuhama*, 8: 3, 1978, 122–138, 123.

[88] Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 139–140; van Duin, "South Africa", 649.

[89] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 105.

[90] Quoted in Ticktin, 340; *VOL*., 21 August 1909. The Transvaal Labour Party, a forerunner of the SA Labour Party, sent a secret counter-appeal to British Labour, opposing any amendments: Lewis, 53.

[91] Abdullah Abdurahman, "The 1909 Presidential Address, Cape Town, 13 April 1909", in edited by R.E. van der Ross (ed.), *Say it Loud: the APO presidential addresses and other major speeches, 1906–1940, of Dr Abdullah Abdurahman*, Bellville: The Western Cape Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, (1909) 1990, 48.

[92] Cope, 112.

critique of the British Empire even garnered praise from *De Burger* ("The Citizen"), the Afrikaner nationalist paper then edited by D.F. Malan.[93]

By 1910 the SDF could report that it was developing a Coloured constituency,[94] anticipating the interracial membership of the CPSA by nearly twenty years. Such, indeed, was its credibility of the SDF amongst Coloureds that Harrison won 212 votes against APO leader Doctor Abdullah Abdurrahman's 543 in a campaign in District Six,[95] notwithstanding Abdurrahman's powerful political machine. Meanwhile, the SDF set up a propaganda commission to reach Africans, gave talks in Afrikaans as well as isiXhosa, drew people of colour into its committees, and reach out to the APO; this influenced Abdurrahman himself to sometimes employ socialist rhetoric.[96] The APO hired the Socialist Hall for its 1909 conference, and backed an SDF candidate in the 1910 municipal elections.[97]

Meanwhile, SDF activists like Harrison and J. Dibble of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners sought to remove union colour bars, to unionise Coloureds, and to secure equal pay.[98] As noted, some Cape craft unions admitted Coloureds. Now, Harrison and company pushed this further: in 1905, the SDF, with Trades and Labour Council backing launched the SA General Workers' Union, "open to all branches of labour who have not a specific Union to join", regardless of race.[99] It drew in Coloured and white bricklayers and painters, Jewish tailors and boot makers, tramway workers, and Greek and Jewish cigarette rollers, becoming a major part of the local union movement.[100] SDF members and Jewish workers also initiated a tailors' union of "all nationalities", although this had little success in drawing in Coloureds.[101] With the APO and others, the SDF set out to unionise the cabinet makers, painters, printers and paperhangers. When the cigarette rollers struck, and were locked out, the strikers set up a "Knock Out" and "Lock Out" cigarette cooperative on SDF premises; SDF enthusiasts had previously set up short-lived co-operatives by bakers and boot makers.[102]

The onset of depression helped drive the strikes, and also prompted SDF efforts at running soup kitchens in District Six.[103] The SDF also took the lead in organised mass meetings of the multiracial unemployed in mid-1906, where cigarette maker and SDF anarchist Levinson called for direct

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[93] Visser, "Die Geskiedenis en Rol", 18.

[94] Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, 23; Forman, "Chapters", 42–4; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 13; A.W. Noon, 22 April 1910, "Cape Notes", *VOL.*

[95] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 24.

[96] Cope, 143; Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, 23; Forman, "Chapters", 35, 42–44 ; Harmel, 29–30; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 13; Lewis, 54–55, 78–79, 98 ; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 76–77, 122, 125–128; van Duin, "Artisans and Trade Unions", 104–105.

[97] See A.W. Noon, 22 April 1910, "Cape Notes", *VOL.*; also see Lewis, 54–55; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 113.

[98] Forman, "Chapters", 42–4; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 17–18, 22–26; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 139.

[99] *CWV.*, 27 October 1905, 2; also Bickford-Smith, 174.

[100] *CWV.*, March 1906, "Tramway Guards and Motormen"; Bickford-Smith, 174; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 1995, 32–39; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 74; Visser, "Die Geskiedenis en Rol", 10.

[101] Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 32–40, quote from 38; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 74; also see Lewis, 19.

[102] Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 36–37, 56–61; *CWV.*, June 1906, "Men versus Money: the Lock Out"; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 10; Evangelos Mantzaris, "From the History of Bundist Activity in South Africa", *Bulletin of the Bund Archives of the Jewish Labour Movement*, 3: 31, 1981/82, 3; Ivan L. Walker and Ben Weinbren, *2,000 Casualties: a history of the trade unions and the labour movement in the history of South Africa*, Johannesburg: South African Trade Union Council, 1961, 18–19.

[103] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 9.

action by the hungry.[104] Young German radical Otto Meyer demanded the crowds "Bring arms, and plenty of ammunition and a black flag".[105] Marches on parliament, led by Harrison, Tobin and others, and backed by the APO and the unions, eventually led to three days of looting and clashes with police.[106] Nearly fifty rioters were arrested and charged,[107] while Levinson, *Cape Socialist* editor Abraham Needham, and Meyer were arrested for inflammatory speeches—"the first time … South African socialists found themselves jailed for their beliefs".[108] Although Levinson was acquitted, Meyer got twelve months with hard labour.[109]

Syndicalism on the Witwatersrand

Around this time, the left on the Witwatersrand displaced that of the western Cape in importance. A critical development was the 1908 launch of South Africa's first socialist weekly, the *Voice of Labour*, in Johannesburg. Initially this paper was a free information sheet used to promote a short-lived General Workers' Union at the Witwatersrand, Kimberley and Bloemfontein, the latter the capital of the old Orange Free State. When the union foundered, the paper was reinvented as a socialist paper by Archie Crawford, a radical fitter, and his partner Mary Fitzgerald; it claimed a very respectable circulation of 2,000 at its height. The energetic Harrison helped proofread the paper, wrote pieces, and arranged for its Cape distribution via the SDF.[110]

In practice, the *Voice of Labour* was basically an open forum that networked "the leading Socialists of Durban, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Pretoria, Cape Town and Johannesburg",[111] and sometimes Southern Rhodesia. Its contents were consequently very varied, especially initially: alongside articles on "The State and the Child" and "Good Government" could be found articles on anarchism, syndicalism, and the merits of direct action over parliamentary politics by Glasse, Harrison and others.[112]

Crawford (and thus, the *Voice of Labour*) appears in the works of the Communist school as a man "tempted to compromise" on race, who "evaded the colour issue" and failed to critique the SA Labour Party's embrace of "white supremacy".[113] This demonstrates the Communist school's tendency to caricature the pre-CPSA left, for Crawford repeatedly insisted, on the contrary, that "Socialism passes over geographic boundaries and transcends all lines, which some diseased organs of society seek … to draw between Races and colours".[114]

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[104] *Cape Times*, 7 August 1906, "[Editorial] Hooligans and Unemployed"; *Cape Times*, 8 August 1906, "[Editorial] Leaders and Led"; Harrison, *Memoirs*, 8–9.

[105] Quoted in R. Hallet, "The Hooligan Riots: Cape Town: August 1906", University of Cape Town, mimeo, 1978, 15.

[106] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 8–9; also see *Cape Times*, 7 August 1906, "Hooligans and Unemployed: disgraceful scenes", Hallet, 15–27.

[107] *Cape Times*, 7 August 1906, "Hooligans and Unemployed: disgraceful scenes"; *Cape Times*, 8 August 1906, "Mob and Police"; *South African Times*, 7 August 1906, "Unemployed Raids in City"; *South African Times*, 8 August 1907, "Hooligans Renew Raids".

[108] Forman, "Chapters", 42–44.

[109] Hallet, 27–31.

[110] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 36.

[111] Archie Crawford, 14 August 1909, "A Socialist Party", *VOL*.

[112] For example, it could carry W.H. Pritchard, 14 August 1909, "Good Government: a noble legacy", *VOL*., alongside Henry Glasse, 15 September 1910, "My Notion of Anarchism", *VOL*., and Wilfred Harrison, 1 July 1910, "Anarchy", *VOL*.

[113] Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 141, 144–145, 154.

[114] Archie Crawford, 31 July 1909, "Irrespective … of Colour", *VOL*.

Crawford dismissed segregation as "foolish in the extreme", lambasted the unions for ignoring the "300,000 coloured workers on the Rand, two-thirds ... on the mines", and championed the local Indians' struggle against increasingly restrictive legislation.[115] He walked out of the founding of the SA Labour Party when his opposition to its segregationist platform was rejected,[116] and ran as a candidate for the small Socialist Party in the 1910 general elections. In his campaign, Crawford argued "on the question of Colour, and at more than one time it looked like he would be torn to pieces by an ignorant mob".[117]

The significance of Crawford's stance as editor was that it set the tone for the *Voice* and the network that emerged around it, with a solid commitment to working class solidarity across the colour line that also linked it to IWW-style syndicalism then emerging locally. Local radicals shared the "disillusion ... in the value of parliamentary reform" that was "spreading from Europe, from Britain, America, Australia and New Zealand", and embraced the "doctrines of the revolutionary Syndicalists with their faith in the industrial struggle and the general strike and their mistrust of politics".[118]

Mann's 1910 tour, which preached the "gospel ... of a complete change of society" and the "perfected system industrial organisation to make this possible",[119] directly inspired the founding of the local SLP in Johannesburg in March 1910.[120] Often misunderstood as a "Marxist" organisation,[121] it was a syndicalist group following the doctrines of Daniel De Leon, the American IWW leader. Links with De Leonism were mainly, however, with the SLP in Scotland, which was the core of the British SLP (1903),[122] rather than De Leon in Detroit. Scots provided key members of the local group: Jock Campbell, the "leader",[123] J.M. Gibson, the key ideologue, John Campbell, and Ralph Rabb and W. Reid. Also important were Jews like Israel Israelstam, who also had links to the Jewish Bund and the SDF,[124] Englishmen like the union activist Charlie Tyler, and even that rarity on the left, an Afrikaner, the chemist Philip Roux.

At Mann's urging, the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council— forerunner of the SAIF— sponsored an Industrial Workers Union to organise workers ineligible for the craft bodies.[125] This held regular Sunday night meetings at the Market Square—Johannesburg's equivalent of Cape Town's Parade—and managed to secure the affiliation of the independent Bootmakers' Associ-

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[115] Archie Crawford, 8 March 1910, "From the Watch Tower", *VOL.*; Archie Crawford, 4 December 1909, "Economic Considerations", *VOL.*; *VOL.*, 13 March 1909, "In Defence of the Indians".

[116] See Ticktin, 420–424.

[117] *VOL.*, 16 September 1910; *VOL.*, 20 November 1909, "Notes of the Week: no compromise!"; Contra. the Communist school version, expressed in Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 141, 154, and replicated in the work of Katz, *A Trade Union Aristocracy*, 273.

[118] Cope, 108–110.

[119] Tom Mann, *Tom Mann's Memoirs*, London, Reading and Fakenham: MacGibbon and Kee, (1923) 1967, 245, 247.

[120] "Socialist Labour Party of South Africa—Incorporation", Department of Law, file LD 1806–AG677/10, National Archives, Pretoria.

[121] For example, Eddie Roux and Win Roux, *Rebel Pity: the life of Eddie Roux*, London: Rex Collings, 1970, 7.

[122] Nan Milton, "Introduction", in Nan Milton (ed.), *John MacLean: in the rapids of revolution: essays, articles and letters*, London: Allison and Busby, 1978, 13.

[123] Walker and Weinbren, 319.

[124] Mantzaris, "From the History"; Evangelos Mantzaris, "Radical Community: the Yiddish-speaking branch of the International Socialist League, 1918–20", in Bozzoli (ed.), *Class, Community and Conflict*, 161, 163; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed Van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid Op Die Suid-Afrikaanse Politiek Van 1886 Tot 1924", PhD diss., University of Potchefstroom, 1968, 51, 57, 60; Ticktin, 182–183, 185, 229, also 518 appendix B, IV, 6; Visser, "Die Geskiedenis en Rol", 15–16; Harmel, 31; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 102.

[125] Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 299.

ation, the Bakers' and Confectioners' Society, and the Tailors' Society. Local syndicalists like the Irish tram driver Tom Glynn nonetheless viewed the union as a "disgrace to the originators" of radical industrial unionism, the IWW, because of its links to the moderate Council and the segregationist SA Labour Party.[126]

Rather than boycott the Industrial Workers Union, however, the syndicalists entered it. Glynn was soon elected its secretary-general, and along with other "industrialists"—notably the Scottish blacksmith, Dunbar—"captured the organisation and put it on a proper basis" in June 1910.[127] It was renamed the IWW, called itself a "class-conscious revolutionary organisation embracing all workers regardless of craft, race or colour", declared war on craft unionism, and linked up with the IWW in Chicago.[128]

Dunbar was a "hefty, stubborn-headed, well-meaning Scotsman": a fine orator, he made his reputation leading a two-week strike on the Natal railways in 1906,[129] and despised all political parties.[130] He was a fixture at the IWW's Sunday night meetings at the Market Square—held separately from those of the SLP, which met there in the mornings, where the party sold a "steady stream of journals and pamphlets" like *The Socialist* from Scotland and *The Weekly People* from the United States.[131]

Despite the loss of supporters like the Bootmakers', who protested the new direction, the IWW held successful meetings at the government railway yards in Pretoria, the old Transvaal capital which lay just north of Johannesburg, setting up a "Pretoria Local".[132] The IWW was also established in the port city of Durban, the principal centre in Natal.[133] This section was strongly identified with a "comrade Webber", who specialised in "phrase-making, blood-curdling class war propaganda".[134] He debated Tommy Boydell of the SA Labour Party before a large crowd at the Durban Town Gardens on "Syndicalism versus Socialism".

Like Cape Town, Durban was defined by "the harbour, the railway and the commerce with the mineral-rich interior",[135] and developed a significant service and manufacturing sector. The two cities accounted, in fact, for more than half of national manufacturing by the 1920s.[136] From 1905 Durban had the shortest rail link to the Witwatersrand, enabling it to replace Cape Town as the main port.[137] The population by 1910 was 65,000 (around half was white, primarily English-

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[126] Tom Glynn, 15 July 1910, "The Movement: present and future", *VOL.*

[127] Archie Crawford, August 1911, "The Class War in South Africa: the growth and outcome of industrial unionism", *International Socialist Review*, vol.. XI, 82–83; Andrew Dunbar, 24 November 1911, "IWW Propaganda Notes", *VOL.*; *Solidarity*, 1 October 1910, "Industrial Unionism in South Africa". Also see Cope, 111.

[128] *Solidarity*, "Industrial Unionism"; Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 301; Philips, 123.

[129] See W.H. Andrews, 23 July 1937, "Natal Railway Strike", *The Guardian*, folder 8.1, W.H. Andrews Papers, Mayibuye Centre, University of the Western Cape; Boydell, "My Luck was In", 35; Cope, 103–107; Walker and Weinbren, 26–28.

[130] Andrew Dunbar, 21 July 1911, "IWW Notes", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 29 September 1911, "IWW Notes", *VOL.*

[131] Andrew Dunbar, 24 November 1911, "IWW Propaganda Notes", *VOL.; The Socialist*, June 1912, "South African S.L.P"; Roux, *Rebel Pity*, 7; also *The Socialist*, October 1910, "The 'Socialist' May be Obtained at the Following Newsagents" and *The Socialist*, January 1912, "The I.W.W. in the United States".

[132] Tom Glynn, 24 November 1911, " 'Recognition' ", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 24 November 1911, "I.W.W. Propaganda Notes", *VOL.*; 1 December 1911, "The 'Sherman' Agitation", *VOL.*

[133] *VOL.*, 14 June 1912, "Heard and Said".

[134] Boydell, "Foreword", xii; *VOL.*, 14 June 1912, "Heard and Said".

[135] Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders*, 29.

[136] Bickford-Smith, 130; Freund, "The Social Character of Secondary Industry", 80–82; Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders*, 29–31; also see Nicol, 70–71.

[137] Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders*, 29.

speaking),[138] although the total number doubles if the outlying areas are included.[139] A quarter of the settled population were Indians, mainly descended from indentured labourers, largely low-caste Hindus. While an Indian bourgeoisie emerged, most local Indians were workers, along with small farmers and an educated elite: doctors, interpreters, lawyers, teachers and clerks.[140] Despite the best efforts of officials to whittle down the Indian vote, it was a serious factor in a number of wards in Durban.

While the IWW in Pretoria and Durban seem to have been primarily propaganda circles, in Johannesburg the IWW successfully formed a powerful Municipal Industrial Union among the white tram drivers and conductors employed by the city. This followed a successful wildcat strike led by Glynn, which was also supported by the municipal power station's staff. Gathered at the tram yards in Newtown, and wearing "bits of red ribbon", the strikers forced the municipality to capitulate within hours.[141] The IWW subsequently boasted of its intention to break the restrictive labour laws, which stipulated compulsory conciliation, whenever necessary.[142] The American IWW press was enthusiastic: "they are getting on the right track down in the Southern Hemisphere".[143]

With between 300 and 400 members, the IWW now compared favourably to major unions like the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (the ASE, with 1351 in 1910) and the Transvaal Miners Association (at 800 in 1909).[144] A second strike followed on the trams in April 1911. This was precipitated by the sacking of Wobblies Glynn and W.P. Glendon after the IWW led a boycott of an official enquiry, in the course of which a witness was assaulted.[145]

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[138] John Lambert and Robert Morrell, "Domination and Subordination in Natal, 1890 –1920", in Robert Morrell. (ed.), *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZuluNatal: historical and social perspectives*, Pietermaritzburg/Johannesburg: University of Natal Press/Indicator Press, 1996, 66.

[139] Extrapolated from figures in the late 1920s, from Freund, "The Social Character of Secondary Industry", 33.

[140] In the Umlazi district of Durban at this time, amongst Indian men there were 3,474 farm labourers, 127 labourers, 77 railway labourers, as well as 256 skilled manual workers, 107 waiters and 53 clerks, in addition to 1634 market gardeners, 176 storekeepers, 169 small cultivators, and 38 grocers: see Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders*, 44–45, table 3.5. "Skilled manual workers" includes bakers and confectioners, barbers and their assistants, basket makers, bricklayers, carpenters and their assistants, jewellers, painters, and printers. On the bourgeoisie, see Lambert and Morrell, 66. See also Vishnu Padayachee and Robert Morrell, "Indian Merchants and *Dukawallahs* in the Natal Economy, c1875–1914", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 17: 1, 1991, 71–102.

[141] *The Star*, "Tram Strike: scenes in the city", undated press clipping, in "Tramway Strike Johannesburg. Report by Inspector White Labour on above dated 24 January 1911", Mines and Works, MNW 44/01, M331/11, National Archives, Pretoria; W.H. Andrews, 6 August 1937, "Tram and Typo Strikers 1911", *The Guardian*, folder 8.1, W.H. Andrews Papers, Mayibuye Centre, University of the Western Cape; Archibald Crawford, "The Class War in South Africa", *International Socialist Review*, vol. XI, 82; Walker and Weinbren, 28–9; *VOL.*, 9 February 1912, "IWW (S.A. Section): Annual General Meeting: New Officers Elected".

[142] "'Industrial Workers of the World' Union expresses contempt for the 'Industrial Disputes Prevention Act'. Inspector's comments", a letter to Acting Secretary for Mines by Inspector of White Labour (R. Shanks), Department of Mines and Works, MNW National Archives, Pretoria.

[143] *Industrial Solidarity*, "Industrial Unionism in South Africa", 1 October 1910.

[144] Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 176, 252.

[145] Letter to Acting Secretary for the Mines, 12 May 1911, Inspector of White Labour (R. Shanks), in "Johannesburg Tramway Employees Strike. Special Report on by Inspector of White Labour", MM331/11, National Archives, Pretoria; Crawford, August 1911, op cit. 82–3; Archibald Crawford, February 1912, "The Pick Handle Brigade: fun and fight on the Golden Rand", *International Socialist Review*, vol. XII, 494–495; *Solidarity*, 24 June 1911, "South Africa IWW"; *The Transvaal Leader*, 12 May 1911, "Tramway Crisis", press clipping, both in "Johannesburg Tramway Employees Strike. Special Report on by Inspector of White Labour", MM331/11, National Archives, Pretoria; *Rand Daily Mail*, 12 May 1911, "Trams Today" tramway men on strike", press clipping in *ibid.*; W.H. Andrews, "Tram and Typo Strikers 1911".

Following fiery speeches at the tramway sheds and at the Market Square, attended by around 500 people, a second strike began. It was waged in the face of a ban on public meetings, with clashes with police led by women like Fitzgerald, and the arrest of the SLP's John Campbell, the IWW's Dunbar and the SA Labour Party's Andrews for speeches.[146] Two IWWs, William Whittaker and T. Morant, were arrested when dynamite was found on the tram tracks.[147] The strike collapsed after a week, 70 workers were fired, and Glynn got three months hard labour, commenting that "if Government ownership, as our political Socialists tell us, is a 'step in the right direction' God help the slaves when they take the wrong one".[148]

Still, the IWW scored a point when it was shown that Whittaker and Morant had been framed by John Sherman, an *agent provocateur*.[149] This led to a series of large IWW meetings in Pretoria that denounced that "working class traitor and spy", now working on the railways.[150] In Johannesburg, meanwhile, the Market Square meetings continued to attract considerable crowds.[151] In October 1911 a "Pickhandle Brigade", including Dunbar, Glynn, Fitzgerald and Morant, disrupted the election meetings of incumbent councillors who had been involved in the crackdown on the IWW tramway workers.[152] Glynn, however, was blacklisted locally, and eventually left the country: he ended up in Australia, where he edited the IWW's *Direct Action* and was arrested during the wartime repression of the Wobblies.[153]

The *Voice of Labour* had also become something of a *de facto* syndicalist organ at this time. Crawford left the country from 1910 to 1911, visiting radical labour groups in three continents. The editorship now passed to "Proletarian" in Cape Town—probably the Cape militant Ferdinand Marais—a vociferous syndicalist. The paper never quite lost its open character, but its copy was now heavily weighted towards IWW and SLP materials.[154] As an observer noted at the time, "From Trades Unionism and Politics", the *Voice* had "flowed to Industrial

Unionism and Direct Action".[155] Even the SDF was swept up in the syndicalist wave. It joined the IWW, SLP and the Johannesburg-based Socialist Party in a short-lived "Industrial Freedom League" for a "united advocacy of Industrial Unionism" in May 1911.[156]

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[146] Appendix in "Johannesburg Tramway Employees Strike. Special Report on by Inspector of White Labour", op cit. Also see Walker and Weinbren, 30.

[147] *VOL.*, 12 January 1912, "Whittaker-Morant Case: a short history".

[148] Tom Glynn, 24 November 1911, "Recognition", *VOL.*

[149] Cope, 119.

[150] Tom Glynn, "Recognition"; Andrew Dunbar, 24 November 1911, "IWW Propaganda Notes", *VOL.*; *VOL.*, 1 December 1911, "The 'Sherman' Agitation". Also see *VOL.*, 1 December 1911, "The Story of John Lafayette Sherman: working class traitor and spy".

[151] Andrew Dunbar, 16 June 1911, "Things You Should Know", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 15 September 1911, "Industrial Union Propaganda", *VOL.*

[152] See Crawford, "The Pick Handle Brigade", Andrew Dunbar, 27 October 1911, "Revolutionary Methods", *VOL.*; T. Morant, 15 September 1911, "Hooliganism", *VOL.*

[153] Verity Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism: the IWW in Australia*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 36, 77, 88, 115, 207; also see Tom Barker, *Tom Barker and the I.W.W.*, recorded, edited and with an introduction by E.C. Fry, Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Canberra, 1965, Ch. 3.

[154] For example, Vincent St. John, 27 October 1911, "History of the Industrial Workers of the World", *VOL.*; Philip R. Roux, 29 March 1912, "An Open Letter to Socialists", *VOL.*; Philip R. Roux, 12 July 1912, "Patriotism", *VOL.*; Philip R. Roux, 11 October 1912, "The Truth about the Defence Act: straight talk to workers", *VOL.*

[155] Jim Davidson, 4 August 1911, "Can We Save the 'Voice'", *VOL.*

[156] Cope, 108–110; Wessel Visser, "Suid-Afrikaanse Koerantberriggewing en- Kommentaar ten opsigte van Arbeiderspartye, Socialistiese Partye en ander Radikale Grope en Bewegings, 1908–1915", MA diss., University of Stellenbosch, 1987, 247–8.

The IWW, the SLP and the national question on the Witwatersrand

As noted above, Crawford's reputation has fared badly at the hands of the Communist School. So, too, it must be said, have those of the IWW and SLP. Relying on the Communist school, Elaine Katz viewed these groups as failing to take a principled position on the national question.[157] She added the charge that the IWW complained bitterly in the *Voice of Labour* about the use of auxiliary African police in the May 1911 tramway strike.[158] Pieter van Duin cited Communist school works, plus Katz, to make even bolder critiques of the IWW.[159] Marcel van der Linden, in turn, cited Katz and van Duin in order to suggest that the South African IWW was remarkable for breaking with the traditional syndicalist opposition to racism.[160]

The problem, however, is that the primary material provides little support for these arguments. In the first place, the IWW's statement in the *Voice of Labour*, to which Katz alluded, did not take issue with the race of the police—only the repressive actions of the police in general, black or white.[161] One speaker who took the platform in the mid-1911 strike is on record for fuming against the use of black forces against white strikers: he was, however, a member of the SA Labour Party, not of the syndicalist IWW or SLP.[162]

The position of the IWW on the national question was unambiguous: "fight the class war with the aid of all workers, whether efficient or inefficient, skilled or unskilled, white or black".[163] The SLP men, too, were "pioneers in the adoption of an enlightened policy towards the Coloured peoples", promoting "unity among all wage slaves, regardless of colour"; Jock Campbell was famed as the first Witwatersrand socialist "to make propaganda amongst the African workers".[164] Mann's tour provided a further reference point, for he told his Johannesburg audience: "Whatever number there are, get at them all, and if there are another 170,000 available, white or black, get at them too".[165] He viewed the local unions as beset by a "suicidal sectional unionism" and lambasted the white man acting "towards the black man as a most superior and lordly personage".[166]

"Proletarian", likewise, advocated "an organisation of wage-workers, black and white, male and female, young and old", which would proclaim "a universal general strike preparatory to seizing and running the interests of South Africa, for the benefit of *workers* to the exclusion of *parasites*".[167] The African workers would inevitably organise for "mutual protection" and "revolt against wage slavery", and the "only logical thing for white slaves to do is to throw in their lot with the black wage slave in a common assault on the capitalist system". "Proletarian" opposed the Defence Bill introduced soon after Union, which established the national army while essen-

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[157] Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 273, 299, 320, citing Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 139–140.

[158] Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 273, 320.

[159] Van Duin, "South Africa", 648–649.

[160] Marcel van der Linden, 1998, "Second Thoughts on Revolutionary Syndicalism: keynote address", presented at the Syndicalism: Swedish and international historical experiences, Stockholm University, 13–14 March 1998, 14–15; also cf. Drew, *South Africa's Radical Tradition*, 16.

[161] *VOL.*, 19 May 1911.

[162] On the speaker, see *Rand Daily Mail*, 12 May 1911, "Trams Today: tramway men on strike", press clipping in "Johannesburg Tramway Employees Strike. Special Report on by Inspector of White Labour", MM331/11, National Archives, Pretoria.

[163] *VOL.*, 25 November 1910.

[164] Cope, 93; Johns, 32.

[165] Cope, 110; Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 271.

[166] Tom Mann, July 1910, "Diamond Mining in South Africa", *International Socialist Review*, vol. XI, 3–6.

[167] *VOL.*, 27 October 1911, "The Problem of Coloured Labour", emphasis in original.

tially restricting armed service in the national army to whites. This was partly on anti-militarist grounds, but partly because he viewed the Bill as a deliberate attempt to use white workers against black: a "native rising", he stressed, would be a "wholly justified" response to "cruel exploitation" and should receive the active "sympathy and support of every white wage-slave".[168]

It follows that the *de facto* failure of the IWW and SLP to recruit across the colour line, thereby realising their vision of an interracial One Big Union, cannot be attributed to racial prejudice or to obliviousness to the national question. Rather, it reflected their overall weakness as union *organisers*, at least outside the trams. This was compounded by the enormous practical difficulties of organising the unfree African workers, the majority of the Witwatersrand working class.

The IWW and SLP's strength lay rather in public propaganda, like the Market Square meetings, where radical speakers traditionally attracted a "little knot of native and coloured men".[169] Leading politicians like John X. Merriman were convinced that the "ravings of the syndicalists" were "appealing, not I fear without success, both to the poorer Dutch [the Afrikaners] and to the Natives".[170]

At the same time, the failure to really organise across the colour line also indicated the lack of a clear strategy to systematically develop linkages with workers of colour. Specifically, the IWW and SLP did not link their *principled* opposition to racial oppression with active and specific efforts to *mobilise* African, Coloured, and Indian workers around both their class and national concerns.[171] In this sense, the SDF in Cape Town was more effective in addressing the national question, even though the SA General Workers' Union lacked the grandiose syndicalist programme of the IWW and SLP.

The stormy years, 1913–1914

In May 1913, a dramatic general strike on the Witwatersrand started, which "shook the country like nothing had done since the Boer War".[172] Initiated by white miners, it spiralled rapidly across industries. Just as quickly, it slipped out of the control of the main unions involved, the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions (another predecessor of the SAIF), and the independent National Union of Railway and Harbour Servants (NURHAS). On "Black Saturday", July 5, imperial troops shot 25 people dead.[173] Riots and gun battles left strikers in control of large parts of Johannesburg, the crowds drawing in the unemployed, the poor whites, and even some "Coloured men".[174]

This was followed by a series of impressive strikes by African miners, lasting three days and involving 9,000.[175] In October 1913, sporadic Indian passive resistance campaigns took a new turn with a general strike amongst Natal Indians on the coalfields, sugar farms and mills, and

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[168] *VOL.*, 1 December 1911, "Sundry Jottings from the Cape: a rebel's review".

[169] *Int.*, 1 October 1915, "Branch Notes".

[170] Cited in Brian Kennedy, *A Tale of Two Mining Cities: Johannesburg and Broken Hill, 1885–1925*, Johannesburg A.D. Donker, 1984, 88.

[171] See Lucien van der Walt, "Reflections on Race and Anarchism in South Africa, 1904–2004", *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, 1, 2004.

[172] Boydell, "My Luck was In", 66.

[173] *The Strike Herald*, 2 August 1913, "Use of Troops"; *The Strike Herald*, 2 August 1913, "British Labour Party and the Imperial Troops". Also see the American IWW paper, *Industrial Solidarity*, 1 November 1913, "The Rand Slaughter".

[174] Contemporary report, cited in Kennedy, 85. Also see Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 418.

[175] Philip Bonner, "The 1920 Black Mineworkers' Strike: a preliminary account", in Belinda Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest*, edited by Belinda Bozzoli. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1979, 274.

railways. This centred a £3 annual poll tax imposed on exindentured labourers, was initiated by Gandhi, and drew in 5,000.[176]

The failure of the compromise that ended the 1913 general strike then led to a second general strike in January 1914. This time the state acted quickly, mobilising the new South African Defence Force and the rural *commando* militia, declaring martial law, raiding the unions, arresting hundreds, and deporting nine key activists (among them, Crawford).

Several months later, the enforced social peace was again shattered when the country entered World War I on the British side. While the SANNC, APO and local Indian Congress suspended their activities to rally to the flag, hard-line Afrikaner nationalists launched an armed rebellion that split the army and mobilised around 12,000 insurgents, mainly rural poor whites.[177] The SDF suffered a split when its pro-war minority broke away in September 1914. The SA Labour Party—which had grown massively in the wake of the massive labour struggles of 1913 and 1914—also split in 1915, when its radical anti-war section walked out.

Anarchism and syndicalism certainly played a role in all of the events of the stormy years. However, the official insistence that the two general strikes were the work of a "Syndicalist Conspiracy" is misleading.[178] The syndicalist movement on the Witwatersrand was weak and divided by 1913.

On his return to South Africa, Crawford had attempted to forge a United Socialist Party, "without discrimination as to race, sex, colour or creed", including the IWW, SDF, SLP and other groups.[179] The United Socialist Party platform was too vague to satisfy anyone and quite unable to overcome the existing divisions: the constituent groups were already firmly wedded to their existing programmes; besides, each group clung jealously to its autonomy.[180]

The SLP and IWW, for instance, had long sniped at one another, each being preoccupied with its claim to represent the "real" IWW tradition.[181] Despite his professed interest in left unity, Crawford himself waged a campaign against Dunbar in 1911 and 1912 that effectively destroyed the IWW. The SLP also left the new party: "the U.S.P. believes in political reform whereas the emancipation of the working class can only be accomplished through their organisation on the industrial field";[182] SLP activists seemed to have then begun to work in the SA Labour Party.[183] The United Socialist Party fell apart, and the *Voice of Labour*, citing apathy and financial problems, closed in December 1912.[184]

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[176] Swan, 246–256; also see Shamim Marie, *Divide and Profit: Indian workers in Natal*, Durban: Worker Resistance and Culture Publications, Department of Industrial Sociology, University of Natal-Durban, 1986, 29–31.

[177] Swart, 161, 165, 169–171, 173–5.

[178] See Jan Smuts, 1914, *The Syndicalist Conspiracy in South Africa: a scathing indictment*, Government Printers, Pretoria, Smuts Papers, University of Cape Town Libraries, folder D10.10; also see *TSH.*, 25 June 1913, "Who are the Inciters".

[179] Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, 30.

[180] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 36; *VOL.*, 24 May 1912, "U.S. Notes"; 31 May 1912, "U.S. Notes"; 13 September 1912, "U.S. Notes".

[181] Andrew Dunbar, 21 July 1911, "IWW Notes", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 21 July 1911, "IWW Notes", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 29 September 1911, "IWW Notes", *VOL.*; Andrew Dunbar, 24 November 1911, "IWW Propaganda Notes", *VOL.*; The Socialist, April 1912, "Down with Sabotage and other Forms of Physical Force".

[182] *VOL.*, 8 November 1912, "U.S. Notes".

[183] See Roux, *Rebel Pity*, 8.

[184] Archie Crawford, 24 May 1912, "The 'Voice'", *VOL.*; *VOL.*, 7 June 1912, "Our Changed Form"; 19 July 1912, "U.S. Notes", *VOL.*; 16 August 1912, "Editorial Notes", VOL; 13 September 1912, "U.S. Notes", VOL; 13 September 1912, "Voice Press Fund, 1912", VOL; 15 November 1912, "Press Fund, 1912", VOL.

In the form of an *organised* current, then, syndicalism was simply unable to plan, launch, or lead the 1913 and 1914 general strikes. Nonetheless, syndicalist ideas and slogans had "a considerable currency in labour circles" at this time.[185] This was shown, for instance, by speeches that described the "Trades Hall" as "the government", or suggested "it might be necessary for the strikers to take over the mines and work them themselves", or called on workers to "have a general strike, and have a revolution".[186] Such views also found expression in *The Strike Herald*, produced in 1913 (and revived briefly in 1914) by Crawford and Fitzgerald, both of whom were very prominent in the 1913 riots.

Moreover, the two general strikes plus the war issue re-energised existing anarchists and syndicalists, radicalised new activists, and evoked a widespread interest in radical ideas. There was, in the first instance, an outpouring of new materials, like the De Leonist tract entitled *The Great Rand Strike: July, 1913*. This drew "lessons" of "service to the proletariat".[187] As an example of radicalisation, an instructive case is provided by George Mason, a carpenter on the mines. Starting as a fairly orthodox SA Labour Party figure, he took the dramatic step of addressing African workers in 1913, when he called on them to strike as well; in 1914, he was deported; by the time public pressure forced the state to allow the deportees to return, he was becoming a staunch syndicalist.[188] As for popular interest in the left, it may be noted that SDF could attract thousands to anti-war rallies, with left influence seen as sufficiently serious that anti-war activists like Harrison were arrested for anti-war literature.[189]

Red, black and white: the ISL and One Big Union amongst people of colour

These developments provided the energy for the rise of the ISL in September 1915. Initial membership drew heavily on syndicalist veterans like Dunbar, Jock Campbell and Tyler. A large component was also provided by the anti-war SA Labour Party activists, like Mason, Andrews, Bunting and Ivon Jones, all radicalised by the 1913–1914 strikes. For Bunting, for instance, the 1913 general strike was the "first act of South Africa's working class revolution, whose end is not yet".[190]

The new ISL soon operated across the country (bar Cape Town, in deference to the SDF), and rapidly established itself as the largest left political group prior to the CPSA. Its weekly paper, *The International,* remains the most impressive of the pre-CPSA periodicals, but was only part of the ISL's large-scale distribution of local and imported papers, tracts and books. The ISL was formed at an auspicious time— just ahead of a huge wave of class struggles starting in 1917. There

[185] Hyslop, *The Notorious Syndicalist*, 200.

[186] See Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 466–467; Jan Smuts, 4 February and 5 February 1914, "Indemnity and Undesirables Special Deportation Bill: second reading", Union of South Africa: House of Assembly, 1914, Government Printers, Pretoria, column 101; *TSH.*, 25 June 1913, "Mr. Madeley's Speech".

[187] Campbell, John and J. Raeburn Munro, 1913, The Great Rand Strike: July, 1913, published by the authors in Johannesburg, printed by E.H. Adlington and Co., 3.

[188] Ernest Gitsham and James F. Trembath, *A First Account of Labour Organisation in South Africa.* Durban: E. and Commercial Printing, 1926, 171; Katz, *Trade Union Aristocracy*, 425; Smuts, "Indemnity and Undesirables", column 67; *Int.*, 7 April 1916, "Call to the Native Workers"; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 159.

[189] Wilfred Harrison, 1914, "WAR!", issued by War on War League in Cape Town, Simons Papers, Manuscript and Archives section, African Studies Centre, University of Cape Town, fragile papers section.

[190] Quoted in Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 66.

were 199 officially recorded strikes from 1906 to 1920: 68 took place between 1916 and 1920, with 175,664 workers were on strike from 1916 to 1922; union membership surged from 9,178 in 1914, to 40,000 in 1917, to more than 135,000 in 1920.[191] A particularly important development in this upsurge was the large-scale entry of people of colour into unions outside of the Cape. This was pioneered by bodies like the Industrial Workers of Africa, and exemplified by the dramatic rise of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) in the 1920s.

The ISL is usually presented by the Communist school as fervently Marxist, with its best elements comprising the core of the protoBolsheviks;[192] at most, the Communist school suggests, there was a syndicalist *minority* in ISL ranks, successfully opposed by the Marxist leadership.[193] The problem with such views is that even a cursory examination of the sources demonstrates that the ISL was an unambiguously syndicalist formation in the IWW tradition. It resolved at its first congress "That we encourage the organisation of the workers on industrial or class lines, irrespective of race, colour or creed, as the most effective means of providing the necessary force for the emancipation of the workers".[194]

It was the ISL, above all, that developed the vision and practice of the integrated revolutionary One Big Union as the combined weapon for national liberation *and* class struggle. The ISL was scathingly critical of white craft unions (and the SA Labour Party) for their "craft scabbery" against one other, and for their "complete oblivion to the sufferings of the lower paid" and "unemployed white workers, mainly women" and "intolerant" attitude "towards the native wage slave".[195] Betraying workers' solidarity and class struggle, they disgraced themselves with no-strike pledges for modest wages, "scabbing on Judas", who at least "demanded thirty pieces" of silver for his treachery.[196] Theirs was a "scab unionism" that pursued sectional privileges for "labour fakers" (as the ISL called the union leaders) and aspiring "labour aristocrats", at the expense of the larger working class.[197]

The craft unions' disgrace was compounded by their failure to recognise the rise of the giant corporations and trusts, against which they had "no earthly hope" of standing, especially in the face of mechanisation and skill dilution.[198] This new era required industrial unions, united in One Big Union and embracing *all* workers. Racial prejudice was against the interests of the whole working class—whether white, black, skilled, unskilled, employed, or unemployed—and the tool of "imperialist notions and alarums".[199]

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[191] Cope, 200; H.R. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*, second ed. Germiston: Christian Mission International, 1988, 103–105; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 333; Duin, "South Africa", 640 note 39.

[192] For example, Cronin, "Origins and 'Native Republic'", 9; Govan Mbeki, *The Struggle For Liberation in South Africa: a short history*, Cape Town/Bellville: David Philips/Mayibuye Books, University of the Western Cape, 1992, 27; Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 134; Jeremy Cronin [writing as "South African Communist Party"], *The Red Flag in South Africa: a popular history of the Communist Party*, Johannesburg: Jet Printers, 1991, 6. For an example of how these claims have been reproduced in more scholarly work, consider Mantzaris, "Radical Community", 161.

[193] Cope, 206; Forman, "Chapters", 74; Harmel, 39; Cronin, *The Red Flag*, 6; Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 215, also see 245.

[194] See *Int.*, 7 January 1916, "League Conference"; *Int.*, 14 January 1916, "The First Conference of the League".

[195] *Int.*, 3 December 1915, "The Wrath to Come".

[196] *Int.*, 22 September 1916, "League Notes"; also see *Int.*, 4 August 1916, "More Craft Scabbery".

[197] See *Int.*, 15 September 1916, "Liberty Sold for 6/3d"; 22 September 1916, "Liberty: Price 6/3"; 2 March 1917, "The Mineworkers to be Made a Scab Union"; 25 May 1917, "Is the White Miner a Miner?".

[198] *Int.*, 9 August 1918, "Craft Unions Obsolete"; *Int.*, 3 March 1916, "The War After the War".

[199] *Int.*, 22 September 1916, "Disunity of Labour".

The instruments of national oppression were means to strengthen the ruling class, as "cheap, helpless and unorganised" African labour ensured "employers generally and particularly industrial employers, that most coveted plum of modern Imperialism, plentiful cheap labour".[200] The "laws and regulations" which "degrade the native workers to the level of serfs and herded cattle"—including the "denial of civil liberty and political rights"—existed "for the express uses of Capital", as "weapons … to be used against all the workers".[201] Thus, "segregation is a policy of capitalism, not of the labour movement".[202] The policy of White Labourism was foolish as well as immoral, as explained repeatedly to white workers: "Make no mistake, your puny breakwater—the colour bar" cannot hold back the "big coloured Industrial Army coming in on the tide of their evolution … demanding that place in the sun to which every single human on this earth is rightfully entitled".[203]

What was required was a "new movement" that would "recognise no bounds of craft, no exclusions of colour".[204] This would organise amongst the unskilled, especially the Africans, paying heed to "the cries of the most despairing and the claims of the most enslaved" workers.[205]

Among its tasks would be "the abolition of all forms of native indenture, compound and passport systems; and the lifting of the native worker to the political and industrial status of the white":[206] "These tyrant laws must be swept away",[207] the ISL declared in laying out its radical programme. Contrary to the literature's tendency to treat such race radicalism as a minority position in the organisation (supposedly identified with figures like Bunting and Ivon Jones, who had to struggle for the "recognition of the black worker" against the "mass" of ISL members)[208] it formed the very heart of official ISL policy, programme and propaganda.

As for strategy, the ISL championed the view that "the Industrial Union" was "the root of all the activities of Labour, whether political, social or otherwise".[209] Specifically, discriminatory laws had to be "repealed by the strength of Trade Unionism",[210] expressed in its most advanced form, the One Big Union:[211]

> Once organised, these workers can bust-up any tyrannical law. Unorganised, these laws are iron bands. *Organise industrially*, they become worth no more than the paper rags they are written on.

Such positions were hardly the hallmark of an organisation that, as the Communist school claimed, viewed national oppression as "not really very worthy of consideration",[212] let alone

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[200] *Int.*, 18 February 1916, "Workers of the World Unite".

[201] *Int.*, 7 December 1917, "International Socialism and the Native: no labour movement without the black proletariat".

[202] *Int.*, 2 June 1916, "Anti-Segregation".

[203] *Int.*, 16 February 1917, " 'The Poor Whites' and a Page From History".

[204] Ibid.

[205] *Int.*, 3 December 1915, "The Wrath to Come".

[206] *Int.*, 14 January 1916, "The First Conference of the League".

[207] *Int.*, 7 December 1917, "International Socialism and the Native: no labour movement without the black proletariat".

[208] Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 74–77; see also Bunting, *Moses Kotane*, 18–19; Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 84, 129–135; Cronin, "Origins and 'Native Republic'", 12.

[209] *Int.*, 5 May 1916, "What's Wrong With Ireland".

[210] *Int.*, 7 April 1916, "Call to the Native Workers".

[211] *Int.*, 19 October 1917, "The Pass Laws: organise for their abolition", emphasis added.

[212] Contra. Cronin, "Origins and 'Native Republic' ", 12.

of one that purportedly embraced segregation.[213] On the contrary, the ISL waged a continual ideological struggle against racial discrimination, arguing that "The whole of the fight against capitalism is a fight with the prejudices and capitalist-engendered aversions of the workers".[214] It systematically critiqued the doctrines of scientific racism as "pure poppycock", stressing that science showed that "all the fundamental phenomena and capabilities of man are rooted in ... humanity which is Black, White and Brown".[215]

The ISL's position was nonetheless very much at odds with the twostage programme elaborated by the CPSA and SACP from 1928. It doubted, in the first place, that African nationalists had a programme that could genuinely emancipate the black masses. Like "Proletarian" on the APO,[216] the ISL viewed the SANNC as basically the party of "native attorneys and parsons" and the "native property owner", with interests "completely alien to the great mass of the Native proletariat".[217] Moreover, these "Labour fakirs of Black South Africa" hesitated to "give attention to the one weapon the ruling class fear—the organisation of the native workers".[218] (The APO and SANNC were certainly moderate at this time: supporting the war effort and the repression of white strikers in 1913 and 1914, they occupied themselves largely with sending polite petitions for minor reforms to the British Crown).

Besides, the ISL argued, the national oppression of workers of colour was largely rooted in capitalism, meaning that national liberation under capitalism was unlikely. Moreover, these workers were also oppressed by class, as *workers*, meaning that their full emancipation from poverty and powerlessness would not be achieved even within the best possible non-racial capitalist order; the colour of the capitalists much change, but class exploitation and cheap labour would not.

A two-stage solution was, in short, was neither required nor to be desired: the One Big Union could simultaneously address the national and social questions, and provide the class power at the point of the production that made a thorough, and revolutionary, solution possible.

The ISL and the reform of the existing unions

The ISL aimed to reform the white unions, while taking the lead in organising amongst people of colour, "the great mass of the proletariat", "black, and therefore disenfranchised and socially outcast".[219] At times it ran in elections, usually with abysmal results, seeing the "white political field" as a "fine opportunity of forcing the issue" of "solidarity with the native workers", and "an echo of this propaganda reaches the native workers as well".[220]

ISL union leaders and activists, like Andrews of the ASE, sought to reform the white unions into syndicalist bodies.[221] In mid-1916, several unions formed the BWIU, with a syndicalist-influenced platform: it aimed to organise industrially, and cultivate "sufficient knowledge and

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[213] Contra. Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 191–192, 210.

[214] *Int.*, 22 September 1916, "Disunity of Labour".

[215] *Int.*, 16 March 1917, "Notes on Natives no. 1"; 23 March 1917, "Notes on Natives no. 2"; also see 2 June 1916, S.G. Rich, "Anti-Segregation"; *Int.*, 9 February 1917, "The Great Unskilled"; also see *Int.*, 23 February 1916, "Race Prejudice".

[216] *VOL.*, 27 October 1911, "The Problem of Coloured Labour".

[217] *Int.*, 5 April 1918; *Int.*, 19 October 1917, "The Pass Laws: organise for their abolition"; *Int.*, 19 October 1917, "Beware of Labour Cranks".

[218] *Int.*, 5 April 1918.

[219] *Int.*, 2 February 1917, "Those 32 Votes".

[220] David Ivon Jones, "Communism in South Africa", *Searchlight South Africa*, 1: 1, [9 June 1921] 1988, 119–122.

[221] Johns, 64–69.

power to enable the Union ultimately to control effectively the Building Industry".[222] ISL militant Tyler was its provisional secretary, and subsequently, its secretary-general and organiser.[223] Still, the *International* worried, "at the risk of being thought hypercritics", whether the union would admit "coloured fellow workers"—[224] correctly, as it turned out, for many BWIU locals were segregationist.

In August 1917, the ISL hosted a conference "to discuss ways and means of urging the workers to unite and organise industrially … and eventually to take over the control of the industry".[225] It attracted fortyfive people—remarkably, including three Africans—and established a multi-racial Manifesto Committee, later renamed the Solidarity Committee.

The Committee's manifesto, distributed at the December 1917 SAIF congress, attacked the existing unions for "their narrow craft vanity, their still narrower colour prejudice, their exclusive benefit funds, their compromising with the robber system, their friendly agreements with their masters to the neglect of the bottom toiler, their scabbery on the unskilled and one another".[226] They were a "delusion and a snare", and served "only the interests of the Capitalists", and had to be superseded by interracial and revolutionary industrial unions, linked up in one National Industrial Union. This "one Industrial Union will become the

Parliament of Labour and form an integral part of the International Industrial Republic". Supporters of this project were invited to attend a conference in Easter 1918, but only members of the International Socialist League and the Industrial Workers of Africa (of which, see below) were present at the event.[227]

An alternative means to contest the established unions was suggested by the Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement in Britain. This was essentially an independent rank-and-file movement that overlapped with the existing unions, but was willing to defy the union leaders in order to wage militant class struggle: "We will support the officials just so long as they rightly represent the workers, but we will act independently immediately they misrepresent them".[228] It was basically a form of syndicalism, which aimed at "control of the workshop, control of the Industry … and … Industrial Democracy",[229] via one "great Industrial Union of the Working Class".[230] This was also shown by its close ties with the British SLP ad the American IWW, including an arrangement for the interchange of membership cards with the latter.[231]

Andrews, as the ISL's most senior unionist, had been sent abroad in 1917 as delegate to several international socialist and labour conferences. In Britain, he addressed the Clyde Workers Committee, where he "reminded the British workers of the struggle in South Africa, and the task of liberating the Native peoples there and elsewhere in the Empire".[232] Meanwhile, the Commit-

[222] Quoted in Gitsham and Trembath, 71.

[223] C.B. Tyler, 14 July 1916, "Union of all Building Workers", *Int.*; Walker and Weinbren, 191.

[224] *Int.*, 9 June 1916, "Trade Unions Reforming".

[225] This account draws heavily on Johns, 66–68.

[226] *Int.*, 22 February 1918, "Industrial Unionism in South Africa", described as the "manifesto of the Solidarity Committee, reprinted here by order of the I.S.L. Management Committee".

[227] Johns, 67–8.

[228] James Hinton, *The First Shop Stewards Movement*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1973, 119.

[229] *The Workers' Dreadnought*, 9 March 1918, "The Workers' Committee", hereafter *WD*. Also see Cope, 191–2; Johns, 68–9.

[230] J.T. Murphy, *The Workers' Committee: an outline of its principles and structure*, Sheffield Workers' Committee, Sheffield, 1918, 4, 15.

[231] Fred Thompson and Patrick Murfin, *The IWW: its first seventy years 1905–1975*, Chicago: IWW, 1976, 135.

[232] Cope, 192.

tee excited Andrews' "particular admiration", and convinced him of the need to "organise the South African workers on similar lines".[233] Upon his return he was hired by the ISL as a full-time organiser, in part in order to promote a local workers' committee movement.[234] Andrews had some success in Witwatersrand engineering, rail and mines, but disappointingly, many of the local "Works Committees" thus established were not particularly radical. There was one critical exception, the Council of Action based on the mines, of which more below.

The ISL's positions were frankly not very popular amongst white workers at this time. When it ran in elections, it was trounced by the other parties, and always lost its deposit. Its weekly public meetings in Johannesburg—held at the Market Square and at the City Hall steps— faced increasing mob violence from thugs like the Comrades of the Great War, a war veterans' group. ISL activists faced a series of arrests and trials, many of which were overtly aimed at suppressing its propaganda. The white unions distanced themselves from the organisation, while recruits from the SA Labour Party soon left over the "revolutionary platform regarding the native workers".[235]

In 1917, the ISL was evicted from its offices in Trades Hall, the main union house, after it refused to accept a management order barring Africans from ISL facilities.[236] It moved to Neppe's Buildings in Fox street, owned by a Jewish supporter, where it continued to produce the *International*, sell radical literature, house a radical library, run Socialist Sunday Schools, and hold meetings.

Immigrant Jews like Neppe played an increasingly important role, with a large and active (and fiercely anti-Zionist) "Yiddish-Speaking Branch" of the ISL formed in August 1917. This produced ISL materials in Yiddish, organised meetings in the multi-racial slums of Johannesburg where most of these immigrants lived, and ran a library and reading room in the Palmerston Hotel.[237] It established contacts in South West Africa, raised money for strikes, and played a key role in the acquisition of an ISL printing press in 1919.[238] Perhaps the most famous of the new recruits was Solly Sachs, a first-generation Latvian immigrant who led the Reef Shop Assistants union, and later played a prominent role in the CPSA.[239]

Black revolutionaries in the ISL

By this stage, the ISL had taken a leaf from the SDF book, and was consciously cultivating links with people of colour, reasoning that "an internationalism which does not concede the fullest

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[233] Cope, 191–192; Johns, 68–69.

[234] Johns, 100–101; *Int.*, 28 November 1919; *Int.*, 12 December 1919; 19 November 1920, "S.A. Railways and the Shop Steward Movement"; and Cope, 200; Johns, 69. 100–102; F.A. Johnstone, *Class, Race and Gold: a study of class relations and racial discrimination in South Africa*, London, Henley and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976, 114–118; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 99–105; *Int.*, 2 August 1918, "Revolution in Britain"; 23 August 1918, "Our 'Great Push' ".

[235] Jones, "Communism in South Africa", 122.

[236] Johns, 75–76.

[237] Mantzaris, "Radical Community", see also Taffy Adler, "History of the Jewish Workers' Clubs", in *Papers presented at the African Studies Seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, during 1977*, Johannesburg: African Studies Institute, 1977, 7–11, 36.

[238] Adler, 10.

[239] "E.S. Sachs", *Forward*, 11 October 1935, Simons Papers, Manuscript and Archives section, African Studies Centre, University of Cape Town, section 7; Bernard Sachs, *Mist of Memory*, London: Valentine, Mitchell and Co., 1973, 74–5, 126–127, 163.

rights which the native working-class is capable of claiming will be a sham".[240] It established its policy "as one of solidarity with Africans as fellow workers in common struggle".[241] By 1918, had recruited a range of African, Coloured and Indian members, and developed a record of working alongside radicals in the SANNC and APO.

An early recruit was T.W. Thibedi, an African schoolteacher who joined the International Socialist League after hearing a talk by Bunting in Johannesburg.[242] A brilliant man with a "genius at getting people together, whether workers in a particular industry, women, location residents, or whatever was needed at the moment",[243] he had connections with the SANNC and lived in the Johannesburg slums in the 1910s. Thibedi was in later years a leader of the Federation of Non-European Trade Unions in the late 1920s, and a founder of the first African miners' union in the 1930s.

In February 1916, an ISL meeting in Johannesburg protested the discriminatory 1913 Land Act,[244] the "first coming together in the Transvaal of white socialists and the African National Congress".[245] It hosted the SANNC's Robert Grendon at a meeting "with a large number of natives", where (to "boisterous approval") it was declared that the unions' colour bar must go.[246] Another talk condemned the "barbarities to which the Indians in Natal were treated".[247]

In 1917, the ISL held a public protest against the Native Affairs Administration Bill, which subjected Africans to rule by decree of the Governor-General.[248] The meeting was "an historic occasion as socialists demonstrated for the first time on the Rand against racial legislation that did not directly affect whites".[249] Then SANNC speakers shared the platform at the ISL's 1917 May Day event, which was disrupted by white thugs—such attacks on ISL were now becoming a regular event.[250] In 1918, the ISL's May Day celebrations took place in Ferreirastown, a mainly Coloured area, the first time May Day in the Transvaal was "directed to non-European workers".[251]

Having committed themselves publicly to the formation of unions amongst people of colour, neglected by the existing unions, the ISL launched an Indian Workers' Industrial Union "on the lines of the IWW" in Durban in March 1917.[252] This drew in workers in catering, on the docks and in laundry, printing, and tobacco, and linked up with Indian colliers and farm workers.[253] In conjunction with the local ISL, the union ran study classes—SLP materials featuring prominently—

[240] *Int.*, 1 October 1995, "The Parting of the Ways".

[241] Forman, "Chapters", 56.

[242] On Thibedi, see Drew, *South Africa's Radical Tradition*, 72 note 19; Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 108; *Umsebenzi: the voice of the South African Communist Party*, May 1991, "Party Pioneers: T.W. Thibedi: the first African Communist", 7: 2, new series; T.W. Thibedi, 10 August 1932, letter to Leon Trotsky, Trotsky Papers, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, folder 1217.

[243] Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 108.

[244] *Int.*, 18 February 1916, "Workers of the World Unite".

[245] Forman, "Chapters", 54.

[246] *Int.*, 9 June 1916, "Another Blow to Colour Prejudice".

[247] *Int.*, 28 July 1916, "Branch Notes".

[248] *Int.*, 16 March 1917, "Workers of the World Uniting".

[249] Simons and Simons, *Class and Colour*, 198; also see Johns, 71.

[250] *Int.*, 4 May 1917, "Mob Law on Mayday" and "Hooliganism: the Last Ditch".

[251] Forman, "Chapters", 65–66.

[252] *Int.*, 7 April 1916, "Call to the Native Workers"; *Int.*, 3 August 1917, "A Forward Move in Durban".

[253] Gordon Lee, 26 October 1917, "Indian Workers Waking Up", *Int.*

and held open air meetings where the "the Indian Workers Choir entertained the crowds by singing the Red Flag, the International and many IWW songs".[254]

This was one of the very first Indian workers' unions in Durban— possibly the first. It was initiated by Gordon Lee, a veteran white IWW organiser, and later the chair of the Durban ISL.[255] The ISL, however, stressed the importance of the union's members electing a committee from their own ranks, which helped avoid paternalism as well as helped develop cadre amongst people of colour. By August 1917, the union was being run by Sigamoney, R.K. Moodley and one Ramsamy, all of whom had a "good ... grip on the class struggle";[256] they were all recruited to the ISL.

Sigamoney was "a committed socialist and a leading member of the ISL, and received fraternal support from trade-unionists and members of the same organisation".[257] Born in Durban, he was a school teacher; he now became the most prominent Indian union leader and anti-capitalist in the city.[258] In October 1917, for example, Sigamoney chaired a public debate on the use of elections, part of an ISL-initiated series to draw in local Coloureds and Indians; he was a featured speaker at the ISL's January 1918 annual congress.[259]

A few months later, the ISL called a meeting at Neppe's Buildings to "discuss matters of common interest between white and native workers".[260] This launched a weekly night school for Africans, focussing on political economy and the necessity of the One Big Union, with the classes run by white ISL members. Sessions attracted around thirty regular students, mainly from the downtown Johannesburg slums, as well as the nearby mines of Village Deep and Crown.[261] Bunting, Dunbar and Gibson were prominent lecturers, stressing the ISL wanted to "make the natives who are the working-class of South Africa be organised and have rights as a white man",[262] and desired that "all the workers black and white ... come together in a union and be organised together and fight against the capitalists and take them down from their ruling place".

In September 1917, the classes were transformed into the Industrial Workers of Africa, explicitly modelled on the IWW.[263] "If we strike for everything", Dunbar commented, "we can get everything ... If we can only spread the matter far and wide amongst the natives, we can easily unite".[264]

As with the Durban initiative, the union was coordinated by a committee elected by the membership, and again, the key figures were recruited into the ISL. Besides Thibedi, African union leaders in the Industrial Workers of Africa included Fred Cetiwe, educated at Qumbu in the

[254] Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 84.

[255] *Int.*, 10 August 1917, "Durban Notes"; *Int.*, 26 October 1917, "Indian Workers Union".

[256] *Int.*, 3 August 1917, "A Forward Move in Durban".

[257] Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 84.

[258] On Sigamoney, see Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 84; Ashwin Desai, Vishnu Padayachee, Krish Reddy and Goolam Vahed, *Blacks in Whites: a century of cricket struggles in KwaZulu-Natal*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2002, 38, 42, 45–51, 57, 59–61, 69–70.

[259] *Int.*, 9 November 1917, "A Socialist Conference in Durban"; 11 January 1918, "Our Annual Gathering"; Alex Mouton, "Van Matroos tot Senator: die kleurryke en stormagtige politieke loopbaan van S.M. Pettersen", *Klio* 19, 1987, 32.

[260] Department of Justice, "The ISL and Coloured Workers", JD 3/527/17, National Archives, Pretoria, hereafter Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[261] Membership list in "The ISL and Coloured Workers", Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[262] Wilfrid Jali, report on meeting of 19 July 1917, Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[263] R. Moroosi, report on meeting of 11 October 1917, in Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[264] Wilfrid Jali, report on meeting of 26 July 1917, in Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

Eastern Cape, who worked in Johannesburg as a picture framer's assistant.[265] Cetiwe embraced ISL doctrines, and urged the union to "preach our gospel": organise and "abolish the Capitalist-System".[266] He worked closely with Hamilton Kraai, an ISL member educated at Peddie in the Eastern Cape, then working in Johannesburg as a foreman and a deliveryman.[267] Union literature in African languages like seSotho and isiZulu circulated across the Witwatersrand, including the compounds, and even moved with migrants to rural Rustenburg, Heilbron, and Cala.[268]

The Industrial Workers of Africa and the ISL also held discussions with the SANNC and APO. Sometimes this had an influence on the nationalists, as when Transvaal APO leader and unionist Talbot Williams wrote an IWW-style pamphlet on *The Burning Question of Labour* for Coloured workers; this was published in APO and ISL editions.[269] Relations with the SANNC in Johannesburg were initially tense, some black syndicalists viewing the moderate nationalist body as representing "the men who organise rich and high people who are the men who suck our blood and sell us".[270]

However, the Transvaal SANNC was undergoing a period of radicalisation at the time, with the emergence of a radical wing opposed to the moderate leadership.[271] This wing was happy to work with— indeed, overlapped with—the Industrial Workers of Africa and ISL, with unionists like Cetiwe and Kraai playing a role in all three bodies. Moderate SANNC leaders therefore deplored the lamentable "spread among our people of the Johannesburg Socialists' propaganda",[272] and worried that "Socialism of the worst calibre is claiming our people".[273]

The general strike movement of 1918

This was certainly demonstrated by the attempted African general strike of the July 1918. Earlier that year, 152 African municipal workers were sentenced to hard labour for striking, thereby breaching their contracts, which inflamed black Johannesburg. The SANNC, Industrial Workers of Africa and the ISL called a series of mass protests, attracting around a thousand people, sometimes more.[274] A joint action committee of all three bodies was formed, comprising the syndical-

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[265] T.D.M. Skota, *The African Yearly Register: being an illustrated biographical dictionary (who's who) of black folks in Africa.* Johannesburg: R.l. Esson, [?1932] n.d., 137; *Int.*, 13 September 1918.

[266] Unlabelled report, May 1918 (full date illegible), in Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[267] Skota, 167; *Int.*, 13 September 1918.

[268] Also see Baruch Hirson and Gwyn A. Williams, *The Delegate for Africa: David Ivon Jones, 1883–1924*, London: Core Publications, 1995, 173; F.A. Johnstone, 1979, "The IWA on the Rand: socialist organising amongst black workers on the Rand 1917–18", in Belinda Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest*, 258–260.

[269] Copies may be found on the 1918 microfilm of The International at the Johannesburg Public Library, and in Department of Justice, "International Socialist League, reports on the activities of ", JUS 526, 3/527/17, National Archives, Pretoria.

[270] *Int.*, 4 January 1918, "A Unique Meeting"; also see Johnstone, "The IWA on the Rand", 260.

[271] See Philip Bonner, "The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917–1920: the radicalisation of the black petty bourgeoisie on the Rand", in Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, Culture and Consciousness 1870–1930*, Harlow: Longman, 1982.

[272] Sol Plaatje, "Letter to the General Secretary, De Beers, 3 August 1918", in Brian Willan (ed.), *Sol Plaatje: selected writings*, Johannesburg/Athens: Witwatersrand University Press/Ohio University Press, [3 August 1918] 1996, 237.

[273] D.D.T. Jabavu, "Native Unrest", in Thomas Karis and Gwendolyn M. Carter, editors, 1972, *From Protest to Challenge: a documentary history of African politics in South Africa, 1882–1964*, [July 1920] 1972, volume one, 124.

[274] Report on meeting of Transvaal Native Congress and Industrial Workers of Africa, 19 June 1918 by unknown detective, in Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

ists along with sympathetic SANNC activists. After some planning, it proposed, to great acclaim by African crowds, a general strike on the Witwatersrand for the release of the sentenced workers, and a shilling-a-day pay rise for African workers.[275] The resolution was carried despite the opposition of SANNC moderates, who were shouted down by the crowd. The ISL's T.P. Tinker proclaimed: "The strike was not for one shilling a day but for Africa which they deserved".[276]

The strike was cancelled at the last minute, although several thousand African miners came out anyway at three mines.[277] Eight people were then arrested for incitement to public violence.[278] Five were ISL members (Bunting, Cetiwe, H.C. Hanscombe, Kraai and Tinker), and a sixth was a member of both the Industrial Workers of Africa and the SANNC (J.D. Ngojo). The remaining two were the SANNC's Thomas L. Mvabaza and Daniel Letanka, who had promoted the Industrial Workers of Africa and the strike movement in the SANNC paper *Abantu-Batho* ("The People"). The arrestees were, in short, hardly the gallery of "Congress leaders" portrayed in some works, since what they shared was a connection with the syndicalist movement.[279]

This was reputedly "the first time in South Africa" that "members of the European and Native races, in common cause united, were arrested and charged together for their political activities".[280] The case collapsed, Cetiwe, Kraai and Hanscombe lost their jobs, and the Industrial Workers of Africa suffered a blow.[281] It was, however, soon reorganised by Thibedi with a "gratifyingly large attendance".[282] Meanwhile, in March 1919, Cetiwe and Kraai played a leading role in a civil disobedience campaign against the pass laws, initiated by SANNC radicals. As Cetiwe said,[283]

> These passes are main chains, enchaining us from all our rights. These passes are the chains chaining us in our employers' yards, so that we cannot go about and see what we can do for ourselves … It is the very same with a dog …

The campaign led to nearly 700 arrests, and Bunting—who was acting on behalf of many defendants—was assaulted by white hooligans near the courthouse.[284]

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[275] Ibid.

[276] *Int.*, 2 August 1918, "The Geweld Case".

[277] See *Int.*, 5 July 1918, "Capital and Labour".

[278] Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 78.

[279] Like, for example, Luli Callinicos, *Working Life: townships and popular culture on the Rand, 1886–1940*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987, 90; Forman, "Chapters", 69; Roux, *S.P. Bunting,* 78; Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: the African National Congress 1912–1952*, London/Berkeley and Los Angeles: C. Hurst Company/University of California Press, 1970, 72.

[280] Skota, 171. There were, in fact, precedents in the 19th century, such as the trial that followed the 1808 anti-slavery rebellion in the Cape: see for example Nicole Ulrich, "'There are no Slaves in their Country and Consequently there Ought to be None Here': the 1808 slave rebellion in the Cape of Good Hope and popular solidarity across the ocean", paper presented at 'Labour Crossings: World, Work and History', University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 5–8 September 2008.

[281] *Int.*, 26 July 1918, "No Socialism for Natives: the case of 'Luke Messina his mark' "; *Int.*, 13 September 1918. It did not "collapse", as suggested by some sources, like Johns, 76; Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 132; Alex La Guma, *Jimmy La Guma*, edited by Mohamed Adhikari, Cape Town: Friends of the South African Library, [1964] 1997, 84.

[282] *Int.*, 13 September 1918; *Int.*, 28 February 1919.

[283] Report on meeting of Transvaal Native Congress and Industrial Workers of Africa, 23 May 1918 by Wilfrid Jali, in Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

[284] Roux, *S.P. Bunting*, 82–83.

Syndicalism in the Cape

In 1919, the ISL noted in Kimberley a "great awakening of industrial solidarity among the Coloured workers … a large portion of the community here", and dispatched an organiser from Johannesburg, the Jewish tailor Sam Barlin.[285] Kimberley, like the Witwatersrand, operated a compound system for African miners, but the major part of its population was Coloured and white. In sharp contrast to the booming gold mining towns and port cities, Kimberley declined rapidly in the new century: in 1911, its population stood at 20,953 whites, and 43,401 people of other races; by 1914, these figures had fallen to 14,888 and 25,755 respectively, and this trend continued into the 1930s.[286]

Barlin set up ISL offices adjacent to those of the SANNC and APO, and helped establish two syndicalist unions. One was the Clothing Workers' Industrial Union, based amongst the several hundred local tailors—mainly Coloureds, with a smattering of Jews and Indians. Once again, the union was run by an elected committee, and once again, the leading figures were recruited to the ISL. Twenty-seven members, all Coloureds, joined the ISL, mostly from the big workshops of Myer Gordon, Reid and Brown. The most important recruit was Gomas, an apprentice tailor at Gordon's, who later also played a key role in the CPSA.[287]

Within a few months, the Clothing Workers' Industrial Union secured shopsteward recognition, the closed shop and wage increases, and spread to Johannesburg, and Durban. It waged, meanwhile, a successful strike to enforce its agreement with employers.[288] Barlin also helped form a Horse Drivers' Union in Kimberley, based amongst the Coloureds who dominated the trade; most worked for the municipality and railways, often in refuse removal. These workers were not included in the recently formed Municipal Employees Association, representing whites. This union also provided ISL recruits, and was headed by local activists K.C. Fredericks and Jan C. Smuts.[289] It struck towards the end of 1919 for a 25 percent wage increase, winning after two tough weeks.[290]

Meanwhile, Cetiwe and Kraai left for the segregated African ghetto, Ndabeni, in Cape Town. They aimed to organise the Industrial Workers of Africa on the docks: these employed the largest single workforce in the city, as well as the majority of Africans. The union's first Cape Town meeting was held on 10th July 1919 in cooperation with the newly formed IndSL, in District Six. It was attended by "200 native and coloured", and the "speeches appeared to be the reverse of pacific".[291] With "fresh members" enrolled, union offices were set up in Francis Street.

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[285] *Int.*, 20 December 1919, "Kimberley Tailors' Strike"; Doreen Musson, *Johnny Gomas: voice of the working-class: a political biography*, Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1989, 16–17, 21.

[286] Musson, 19.

[287] Ray Simons, "Review: Johnny Gomas as I knew him", *South African Labour Bulletin*, 15: 5, 1991; Musson, 11–16; also see *Grassroots*, September 1982, "Johnny Gomas: a lifetime of struggle".

[288] *Int.*, 20 December 1919, "Kimberley Tailors' Strike"; *Int.*, 27 June 1919; *Int.*, 4 July 1919; also see Johns, 98 and Musson, 17–18.

[289] Musson, 18.

[290] Also see Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 155, see *Int.*, 2 January 1920, "Kimberley Strikes: more white scabbing"; Minutes of the City Council, Kimberley, 9 December 1919, 501, 23 December 1919, 511–512, and 1 January 1920, 550–551, 3/KIM 1/1/1/16, Cape Archives.

[291] *Int.*, 25 July 1919; F.V. Pickard, "Report of meeting of Native Workers held at Winter Gardens hall, Ayre Street, Capetown, July 10th, 1919", Department of Justice, JD 3/527/17.

The IndSL, for its part, was a syndicalist breakaway from the SDF in May 1918: its members viewed the SDF as "too academic".[292] It was initially driven by younger men, like C. Frank Glass, an English tailor, and A.Z. Berman, a Russian Jew, school teacher and businessman.[293] The IndSL programme was the "abolition of the wage system and the establishment of a Socialist Common-wealth based on the principle of self-governing industries, in which the workers will work and control the instruments of production, distribution and exchange for the benefit of the entire community".[294] Its strategy was not "broadly" Marxist,[295] but centred on "building up that effi-cient organisation commonly known as the One Big Union".[296] Elections were seen as useless, even for propaganda. In any event the "big masses of the proletariat, natives and a big section of coloured have no vote at all".[297]

The IndSL was strongly orientated towards workers of colour, with key militant Manuel Lopes stating bluntly that "propaganda amongst the coloured and native workers is the work that counts".[298] Craft unions and colour bars played into the ruling class' policy of "divide and rule", based on irrational "patriotism, racial pride and nationalism".[299] Real socialism "claims for every man, women or child, white or coloured, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness".[300] It advocated the "solidarity of labour irrespective of colour or race".[301] Like the ISL, its initial core consisted of white militants, but this too would change.

Its first headquarters were in Ayre Street, District Six, with a venue that could seat 600.[302] Detectives reported "considerable numbers of coloured and native people" attending its functions, "the movement … growing in numbers and importance".[303] The IndSL was also in regular contact with visiting IWW sailors, who "taught the League to sing".[304]

Later the IndSL moved to better facilities in Plein street in central Cape Town, where its new So-cialist Hall was opened in early 1919 to a crowd of "between 300 and 400 persons", despite heavy rain.[305] The audience was "chiefly Russian Jews and coloured"; speakers included the fiery S.H. Davidoff (IndSL), Coloured unionists linked to the IndSL like Brown, M.A. Gamiet and B. Kies, Harrison (SDF) and Boydell (SA Labour Party).[306] Open air events by the SDF and the League

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[292] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 64.

[293] Harrison, *Memoirs*, 56–7, 64–70; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 7–10.

[294] *The Bolshevik*, February 1920, "What WE Stand For", hereafter *Bols.*

[295] *Contra.* Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 1–2.

[296] *Bols.*, April 1920, "The War of the Classes".

[297] "Communist", January 1920, "On Political Action", *Bols.; Bols.*, March 1920, "Trades Union Notes"; *Bols.*, March 1920, "The Case Against Parliamentarism".

[298] *WD.*, 7 August 1920, letter from Manuel Lopes.

[299] *Bols.*, January 1920, "The Strongest Weapon of Capitalism I"; also see "Searchlight", November 1919, "Trade Union Notes", *Bols.*; "Searchlight", January 1920, "Trade Union Notes", *Bols.; Bols.*, November 1919, "The Bankruptcy of Trades' Unionism"; *Bols.*, February 1920, "The Strongest Weapon of Capitalism II"; *Bols.*, March 1920, "Trades Union Notes"; Manuel Lopes, April 1920, "Socialism and the Labour Party", *Bols.*

[300] Isaac Vermont, March 1920, "Socialism and the Coloured Folk", *Bols.*

[301] *Bols.*, March 1920, "Trades Union Notes".

[302] *Int.*, 21 December 1918, "Cape Notes".

[303] Commissioner of Police, 29 July 1919, letter to Secretary of Justice, in Jus-tice Department, "Bolshevism in SA, Reports on", volume 267, 3/1064/18, National Archives, Pretoria, 86; the file is hereafter Justice Department, 3/1064/18.

[304] Manuel Lopes, 24 January 1919, "Cape Notes", *Int.*

[305] Manuel Lopes, 24 January 1919, "Cape Notes", *Int.*; also see Harrison, *Memoirs*, 68 and Mantzaris, *Labour Strug-gles*, 4.

[306] "Secret: Bolshevism", January 1919, in Justice Department, 3/1064/18, 207. Davidoff seems to have previously championed "propaganda by the deed" in Pretoria: see Harrison, *Memoirs*, 38. Gamiet was an IndSL sympathiser, and

often attracted over 400 people at this time,[307] although the SDF was faring badly in the competition with the new body.

Between May 1919 and May 1920, the IndSL held an amazing 135 outdoor meetings and 32 indoor lectures, as well as innumerable "socials, lectures etc.".[308] It was soon able to get "the services of a few coloured and Malay comrades in our propaganda".[309] Besides this, the IndSL ran a library, study groups, Socialist Sunday Schools and a Young Socialist Society, and published a monthly called *The Bolshevik*.[310]

In 1918, the Industrial Socialist League formed a syndicalist union amongst the African and Coloured workers of the food processing factories in downtown Cape Town, like Hills factory and Buchanan's.[311] The first meeting was held 10 September at its headquarters, and attended by 30 workers who resolved to "form an Industrial Union" and do "everything in its power to assure its success".[312] Berman was the organising secretary, and Kies the chair, of the new Sweets and Jam Workers' Industrial Union, and the IndSL provided funds.[313]

Many African workers also joined, so the second meeting saw a "Com. Mpanpeni" acting as an interpreter, while "Com. Nodzandza" was elected to the largely Coloured executive.[314] IndSL Meetings in the factory district attracted the ire of employers, with at least one meeting surrounded and stopped by a large police presence.[315] Meanwhile, the IndSL busied itself in the Cape Federation of Labour, where it had radical resolutions—like support for the Soviet Republic, and the "formation of Industrial Unions out of the existing Trade Unions"— passed at the 1920 and 1921 congresses,[316] although these were never implemented.

In December 1919 the IndSL worked closely with the Industrial Workers of Africa, which was embroiled in a major strike on the docks. The strike followed a joint meeting of the Industrial Workers of Africa, the ICU and the Cape Native Congress in Ndabeni, attended by 800 and chaired by Kraai.[317] It was Cetiwe who proposed the strike, and it was Cetiwe who, in the name of the

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head of the Tailors' and Tailoress' Union; Brown was an IndSL member: Commissioner of Police, 1 June 1920, "Report on Bolshevism in the Union of South Africa", in Justice Department, 3/1064/18, 104. B. Kies was almost certainly an IndSL member.

[307] Commissioner of Police, 27 August 1920, letter to Secretary of Justice, in Justice Department, 3/1064/18, 73

[308] *Bols.*, February 1920, "League Notes".

[309] WD., 7 August 1920, letter from Manuel Lopes.

[310] *Bols.*, November 1919; *Bols.*, December 1919; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 13.

[311] Manuel Lopes, 27 September 1918, "Cape Notes", *Int.*; Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Industrial Union of the Combined Sweet and Jam Workers Union of the Cape Peninsula, held at the Industrial Socialist League Hall, 3 December 1918, S.A. Rochlin Collection of South African Political and Trade Union Organisations, Concordia University Library Special Collection, B3A F12 I5; also see Johns, 89; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 13.

[312] First meeting, 10 September 1918, in Minutes of the First, Second and Third Meetings of the Industrial Union of the Combined Sweet and Jam Workers, held in the Industrial Socialist League Hall, 1918, S.A. Rochlin Collection, B3A F12 I4.

[313] Manuel Lopes, 27 September 1918, "Cape Notes", *Int.; Int.*, 21 December 1918, "Cape Notes"; also see Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 13.

[314] Second meeting, 17 September 1918, in Minutes of the First, Second and Third Meetings.

[315] L. Turok, 24 January 1919, "Cape Notes", *Int.*

[316] *Bols.*, May 1920, "Trade Union Notes"; Commissioner of Police, 1 June 1920, "Report on Bolshevism in the Union of South Africa", to Secretary for Justice, in Justice Department, 3/1064/18, 103; Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles*, 25, note 106.

[317] Peter L. Wickens, "The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa", Ph.D. diss., University of Cape Town, 1973, 67.

Industrial Workers of Africa, sent the municipality the ultimatum: 10 shillings a day for unskilled workers, or strike action.[318]

Initially supported by the Cape Federation of Labour and NURHAS, the strike really rested on the Industrial Workers of Africa and the ICU, which held daily mass assemblies on the Grand Parade in the mornings, followed by evening meetings on Adderley Street.[319] Police and soldiers began to evict strikers from the Docks Location, another African ghetto, on Christmas Eve,[320] the unions squabbled, and the strike disintegrated. The two unions later held a joint meeting of 300 on the Grand Parade in March 1920.[321]

Echoes and legacies

Cetiwe and Kraai had tried to push the SANNC towards a policy of militant strike action at its annual congress in 1918, and repeated the performance at the congress of 1920. They were defeated, but the SANNC did resolve to support a general labour conference in Bloemfontein that year. The meeting drew in emerging unions from across the country, including the ICU and Industrial Workers of Africa, which resolved to merge under the ICU banner into "one great union of skilled and unskilled workers of South Africa, south of the Zambesi".[322] Ultimately Clements Kadalie, the leader of the original ICU, established himself as the key ICU leader.

The reference to "one great union" was no mere rhetorical flourish: the ICU repeatedly invoked the vision of "abolishing the capitalist class" through one big strike,[323] devised a constitution based on that of the IWW,[324] and drew the ire of the CPSA for its "pronounced anarcho-syndicalist tendencies".[325] It was far too eclectic, in fact, to be truly called syndicalist—Garveyism was a major influence, for example— but syndicalism was certainly part of its heady ideological mix. In the 1920s, the ICU would explode across the country with over 100,000 members, mainly African, at its height. Moreover, the ICU also spread into neighbouring colonies, spreading elements of syndicalism even further afield.[326]

In the meantime, the ISL, SDF, IndSL and several other smaller groups would come together to launch the CPSA, supplying most of its key leaders; the *International* became the CPSA pa-

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[318] Fred Cetiwe, 21 December 1919, "To the Mayor of the City of Cape Town", in "Strike of Natives in Docks", 3/CT, 4/1/4/286, F31/4, Cape Archives. This was more than double the minimum wage of 4 shillings established the previous year: Barry Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town: the origins and development of state policy and popular resistance to 1936", MA diss., University of Cape Town, 1985, 205. All mention of the Industrial Workers of Africa is absent from Kadalie's autobiography.

[319] Clements Kadalie, 42; Wickens, 69–74.

[320] Kadalie, 43; Wickens, 73–79, 82–83.

[321] Wickens, 84.

[322] Quoted in Wickens, 145–146.

[323] For instance, Divisional Criminal Investigations Officer, Witwatersrand Division, 1 May 1926, Confidential Report to Deputy Commissioner, South African Police, Witwatersrand Division, Johannesburg, in Department of Justice file, JUS 915 1/18/26 part 2. Pretoria: National Archives.

[324] Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa, "Revised Constitution of the ICU", in Karis and Carter, *From Protest to Challenge*, [1925] 1972, 325–326.

[325] Alfred Nzula, [1935] 1979, "The Struggles of the Negro Toilers in South Africa", appendix to Alfred Nzula, I.I. Potekhin and A. Zusmanovich, [1933] 1979, *Forced Labour in Colonial Africa*, Zed Books, London, edited and introduced by Robin Cohen, 206.

[326] See Lucien van der Walt, 2007, "The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa: White Labourism, the IWW and the ICU, 1904– 1934", *African Studies*, 66: 2/3, 2007, 237–243.

per, and the ISL Press the CPSA press. Not surprisingly, even an official Party history concedes, "syndicalist concepts remained within the Communist Party for many years after its foundation; echoes of their approach and phraseology appear in many documents and journals".[327] This lingering syndicalism was largely excised during the New Line period, which marked, in this sense, a major rupture in the party's history.

The third echo of syndicalism in the 1920s was provided by the Council of Action, identified with Percy Fisher, Ernie Shaw and H. Spendiff, "desperate men—men who would stop at nothing".[328] The Council advocated the formation of "revolutionary industrial units" and "a Republic of Industrial Workers",[329] and briefly took control of the Rand Revolt, opposing racial clashes and challenging the state power. Fisher and Shaw died, apparent suicides, as troops stormed the insurrection's headquarters in downtown Johannesburg.

In conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that anarchism and syndicalism in South Africa consistently sought to address the national question. The anarchist and syndicalist movement was multiracial in composition, as well as internationalist in outlook, and was characterised throughout by a principled and distinctive opposition to racial discrimination and prejudice, with a commitment to interracial labour organising and working class unity. Racial discrimination was lambasted as an outright evil, and racial prejudice as a profound threat to the working class. In its most developed form, the libertarians' approach envisaged One Big Union as the means of constituting a common society based on class solidarity. This would be an Industrial Republic, not a nationstate, and form part of a universal human community, the International Industrial Republic.

This vision has been obscured by the misrepresentations of the preCPSA left practiced by the influential Communist school of labour and left history. It is fundamentally at odds with the two-stage strategy identified with the CPSA and SACP from 1928 onwards, which envisages the establishment of an independent, democratic and capitalist republic as a step towards a socialist order. This anarchist/syndicalist strategy assumes the necessity and desirability of delinking anticolonial and class struggles, and tends to conflate national liberation with *nationalism*. From this perspective, it is perhaps unthinkable to Communist school writers that the pre-CPSA left may have had a sophisticated, perhaps even a viable, approach to the national question. If this is conceded, and if nationalism is therefore reduced to but *one current* in national liberation struggles, then much of the rationale for a two-stage theory falls away.

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[327] Harmel, 40.
[328] Boydell, "My Luck was In", 196.
[329] F.W. Pate and A. McDermid, 18 February 1922, "Manifesto of the Mineworkers", *WD*.

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Korean Anarchism Before 1945:
A regional and transnational approach

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Recent works on the formation of radical politics in China have revealed the usefulness of regional perspectives on, and the importance of transnational approaches to, the history of modern East Asian history. Unlike earlier studies of regionalism in East Asia, which focussed on the cultural arena, these underline the importance of direct and indirect interactions amongst radicals circulating in the area and, as a result, the role of transnationalism in the formation of national discourses.[2] Drawing upon these works, I have argued elsewhere for the transnational and regional aspects of the Korean anarchist press published in China and Japan in the 1920s and 30s, raising issues that this chapter develops further.[3]

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which Korean radicals in China and Japan were exposed to, and subsequently accepted, anarchism in order to highlight the role of, and tension between, national consciousness and transnational concerns in their conversion to anarchism. I wish to demonstrate the complex relationship between nationalism and anarchism in a colonial situation like Korea, annexed by Japan in 1910. This relationship calls into question a flawed assessment of Korean anarchism that basically views it as an "aberration" from the anarchism developed in Europe on the grounds that some Korean anarchists supported the idea of establishing a national government. Korean anarchism, according to this understanding, abandoned "the basic principles in anarchism" and finally "reduced 'anarchism' to a liberal concept" and to nationalism.[4]

On the contrary, I suggest the need for a dialectical and nuanced understanding of Korean anarchism: Korean radicals read anarchism with *their* immediate nationalist goal of independence in

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[2] See Alifu Delike (Arif Dirlik), "Dongyade xiandaixing yu geming: quyu shiye zhongde Zhongguo shehui zhuyi" ("Eastern Asian Modernity and Revolution: Chinese Socialism in Regional Perspective"), *Makesi zhuyi yu xianshi* ("Marxism and Reality") 3, 2005, 8–16 and Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002. See for a Vietnamese case, Christopher E. Goscha, *Thailand and the Southeast Asian Networks of the Vietnamese Revolution, 1885–1954*, London: Curzon Publishers, 1999.

[3] See Dongyoun Hwang, "Beyond Independence: The Korean Anarchist Press in China and Japan in the 1920s–1930s", *Asian Studies Review*, 31: 1, 2007, 3–23 for the publication activities of Korean anarchists in China and Japan. Some of my discussions below draw from this article unless indicated. I want to note here that sources for the study of Korean anarchism are very fragmentary and limited, as the activities of Korean anarchists had mostly been conducted in secret. Even the prominent anarchist Yi Jeonggyu lamented that he was not able to locate information and materials on his own anarchist life and activities. See Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon* ("Collection of the Works of Yi Jeonggyu"), Seoul: Samhwa insoe, 1974, 23. The discussion below, therefore, relies on the limited, fragmented sources available, both primary and secondary.

[4] See John Crump, "Anarchism and Nationalism in East Asia" *Anarchist Studies*, 4: 1, 1996, 46, 47, 49.

mind, and, conversely, articulated that goal with *their* understanding of anarchism. This demonstrates that, in the colonial context, nationalism played a significant role in the rise and spread of anarchism among Korean radicals, but does not suggest, by any means, that Korean anarchism can be reduced to nationalism. In general, the activities of Korean anarchists in the Korean peninsula, as well as those of the Korean anarchists in China and Japan, were focussed not merely on Korea's independence, but also on the establishment of an anarchist society.[5]

I also examine the activities and projects that Korean anarchists jointly planned and conducted with their counterparts in China and Japan in order to demonstrate the important role of transnationalism in shaping the rise and character of Korean anarchism. I argue that there were key transnational linkages in the history of Korean anarchism, which are usually missing from (or at best are marginalised in) Korean nationalist accounts of the history of the movement.

My discussion is limited to the Korean anarchists in China and Japan before 1945. This is not because Korean anarchism within the Korean peninsular itself was of no importance, but rather because anarchism was first introduced to, and accepted by, Korean radicals and students in China and Japan; it only then spread into Korea. This explains why interactions with other anarchists in China and Japan were crucial to the rise of Korean anarchism, both abroad and in Korea.

Anarchist activities within the Korean peninsula were also closely tied to the activities of Korean anarchists based in China and Japan. There were many attempts within Korea to form anarchist organisations and disseminate anarchist ideas by those returning from abroad, mostly from Japan. These always met prompt and brutal suppression at their inception from the Japanese colonial police. As a result, while many anarchist organisations were formed throughout Korea in the 1920s, all were short-lived. The situation became even harsher in the 1930s once Japan invaded China. In this situation, anarchists in Korea generally faced the choice of going underground, or being arrested under Japan's wartime repression of "dangerous ideas". Even so, attempts to publish anarchist materials continued.

The history of Korean anarchism before 1945 has mainly been examined either in the context of the rise of communism in Korea, or that of the 1945 "victory of Korean nationalism" over Japanese colonialism. Although there has been a growing recognition that anarchism in 20th century Korea had a "historically important role" in the struggle to "move" toward independence, many scholars still view it as an idea "utilized" by nationalists to "terrorize the enemy" by recourse to "terrorist actions", thus serving the ultimate goal of independence.[6] Korean anarchists were, in other words, supposedly nationalists rather than actual anarchists; Korean anarchism must be nationalist in form and character, according to this dominant line of interpretation.

There is no doubt that independence was the primary, and immediate, goal of Korean anarchists, but it does not mean it was their only, or ultimate, goal. They aimed not just to gain independence through a political movement, but also to achieve a social revolution based on an-

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[5] For a detailed description of Korean anarchist movements within Korea, see Mujeongbu juui undongsa pyeonchan wiweonhoe (ed.), *Han'guk anakijeum undongsa* ("A History of the Korean Anarchist Movement"), Seoul: Hyeongseol chulpansa, 1989, 189–274, 394–400. This text is hereafter abbreviated as *HAU*. Also see Gu Seunghoe (ed.), *Han'guk anakijeum 100nyeon* ("One Hundred Years of Korean Anarchism"), Seoul: Yihaksa, 2003, 155–206.

[6] See, for example, Kim Changsun and Kim Junyeob, *Han'guk gongsanjuui undongsa* ("A History of the Korean Communist Movement") 5, Seoul: Cheonggye yeon'guso, 1986, new edition, 139–146, 265–274 and the special issue of *Han'guksa simin gangjwa* ("The Citizens' Forum on Korean History") on "20 segi han'guk eul umjigin 10dae sasang" ("Ten Thoughts that Moved Korea in the Twentieth Century") no. 25, August 1999. Citations are from Lee Key-Baik's short introduction to *ibid.*, iii–v.

archist principles.[7] Moving away from the nationalist analysis of Korean anarchism, therefore, I argue that Korean anarchism was the product of interactions between Korean anarchists and other anarchists in China and Japan. During these interactions, anarchism was introduced to the Koreans from various transnational sources. It was developed not only to meet the immediate, national goal of independence, but also, within the Korean concrete circumstances, to modify, as well as link, the national goal to the cosmopolitan ideals of anarchism, expressed in the notion of social revolution.

In the discussion below, I borrow the concept of "communities of discourse", formulated by Robert Wuthnow, according to which "a process of mutual influence, adjustment, accommodation" occurs that produces radical culture "as a form of behaviour and as the tangible results of that behaviour".[8] Korean communist Kim San (1905–1938), who was an anarchist for a short while in the early 1920s, described Tokyo in 1919 as "the Mecca for students" from "all over the Far East and a refuge for revolutionaries of many kinds". Similarly, Shanghai appeared to him at the time as "the new centre of the nationalist movement where the Korean provisional government was functioning". In these two locations he "met all kinds of people and was thrown into a maelstrom of conflicting political ideas and discussions".[9] As Kim San noted, Tokyo, Shanghai and other centres served in the early 20th century as the crucibles within which radical cultures were forged, and in which radical discourses on revolution, colonialism and imperialism were articulated.

These Korean anarchist activities were mainly concentrated in the cities, although as demonstrated below, Quanzhou in Fujian Province in China was also a key transitional concentration point for East Asian anarchist experiments in middle and late 1920s. Korean radicals in these locations were introduced to, and drawn to, anarchism through their associations with their counterparts in China and Japan, as well as their readings of the anarchist works, both original and in translation, available in China and Japan. The significance of these transnational sources is their influence upon, and inspiration for, Korean radicals which, in turn, somewhat ironically helped them to envisage their national goal through transnational lenses. The Korean anarchists' cooperation with their counterparts elsewhere also sheds light on how they came to share concerns and languages pertinent to the problems of the world with other anarchists, and at the same time on how they came to select from these that which they thought most essential to the Korean independence struggle.

In this process of selection, Korean anarchists were able to articulate their national goal with the help of anarchism, and, conversely, understand anarchism through their national circumstances. In doing so, they faced a tension between their national goal of independence, and their transnational concerns and their vision of international social revolution, leading them to attempt to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory projects. I posit that a process of influence, inspiration, adjustment, and accommodation occurred during the course of this interaction, selection and articulation in order to address national goals in a colonial context. At the same time, there was obviously a common consciousness among Korean and other Asian anarchists, arising from their interaction, regarding their shared fate under imperialism, including colonialism,

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[7] See Hwang, "Beyond Independence".

[8] Robert Wuthnow, *Communities of Discourse: Ideology, and Social Structure in the Reformation, the Enlightenment and European Socialism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989, 9, 15.

[9] Nym Wales and Kim San, *Song of Ariran: A Korean Communist in the Chinese Revolution*, San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1941, 89, 107, 118.

and capitalism, and regarding their common vision of an anarchist solution. This enabled joint activity to realize both the shared anarchist vision, and the specific national goal of the Koreans.

The case of Korean anarchism, I think, reveals the visible influence and inspiration of its counterparts in China and Japan in shaping its direction and character. For example, the ideas of social revolution, of combining physical and mental labour, of individual freedom and spontaneity, and of rural autonomy arose from Korean anarchists' interactions before 1945 with their counterparts. The Quanzhou case (below) exemplifies the leading role that Korean anarchists sometimes took in Chinese and East Asian anarchist projects. The experiences gained through such cooperation were also significant to the development, in ensuing years, of common outlooks and solutions. Some of these ideals survived in Korean anarchism after 1945 in similar, if not the same, forms.[10] In short, interactions among East Asian anarchists, in transnational radical communities of discourse and activity, were, I posit, integral to the articulation of the discourse and language they produced on anti-imperialism, national liberation, independence, national development, revolution and freedom.

While I underline the influence and inspiration that Korean anarchists received from their counterparts in China and Japan, it does not follow that Korean anarchism must be understood only in the context of Chinese and Japanese anarchism. Rather, the point is to emphasize that the history of Korean anarchism is deeply entangled with that of Chinese and Japanese anarchism, and *vice versa*, and therefore, to argue for the utility of using a regional perspective and examination of transnational linkages in order to understand the history of anarchism in Korea.

Korean Acceptance of Anarchism: national consciousness and transnational concerns

Anarchism had been introduced to Koreans long before the March First Movement of 1919,[11] a nation-wide massive demonstration against Japanese colonial rule in Korea. However, it was only after the 1919 movement that Korean radicals and students in China and Japan began to seriously consider anarchism as an idea for Korea's independence. Their contacts and associations with Chinese and Japanese anarchists and radicals and their organisations were crucial in having them accept anarchism.[12] Also important were their readings of the anarchist writings available at the time.

In fact, the anarchist literature available in Chinese translation by 1920 (to which Korean radicals in China probably subscribed) was "unmatched in scope and comprehensiveness by any other social and political philosophies of European origin".[13] Japanese writings and translations

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[10] Oh Janghwan also mentions in passing the possible linkage between pre- and post-war Korean anarchism. See his "Yi Jeonggyu (1897–1984) ui mujeongbujuui undong (Yi Jeonggyu's Anarchist Movement)", *Sahak yeon'gu* ("Studies on History") no. 49, March 1995, 198–199. For a full description of the postwar Korean anarchist activities led by the Institute of People's Culture (Gungmin munhwa yeon'guso), founded by Yi Jeonggyu, see *Gungmin munhwa yeon'guso, Gungmin munhwa yeonguso 50 nyeonsa* ("A Fifty-Year History of the Institute of People's Culture"), Seoul: Gungmin munhwa yeon'guso, 1998, especially Chs. 2, 3.

[11] Yi Horyong, *Han'guk ui anakijeum—sasang pyeon* ("Anarchism in Korea: Its Ideas"), Seoul: Jisik saneobsa, 2001, 137–166.

[12] See Hwang, "Beyond Independence" and Bak Hwan, *Sikminji sidae hanin anakijeum undoongsa* ("A History of Korean Anarchism during the Colonial Period"), Seoul: Seonin, 2005, 15–44.

[13] Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, 82.

of socialism and anarchism were abundant and readily available to Korean radicals and students in both Korea and Japan. Kim San recalled that:[14]

> From 1919 to 1923 Korean students were far in advance of [the] Chinese in social thinking, partly because of our more pressing need for revolution and partly because of our closer contacts with Japan, the fountainhead of the radical movement, both anarchist and Marxist, in the Far East at that time. It was from Japanese translations of Marxism that both Koreans and Chinese first became acquainted with this theory.

Upon his release from a colonial Japanese jail in Korea in April 1921, Kim Seongsuk (1898–1969), a Marxist and independence activist, also found that Korean society was "filled with socialist ideas", which he believed was due to the influence of Japanese books and translations about socialism.[15] Choi Gabryong (1904–?)—who had become an anarchist in Japan, but whose anarchist activities were mostly conducted in Korea itself, leading to his arrest by Japanese police in 1931—was overwhelmed by the number of books on socialism available in Tokyo when he went there in 1924; this is also indicative of Koreans' access to socialism through Japan.[16] As a matter of fact, socialism became so popular among Koreans that by May 1927 it was the subject of daily conversations among Korean youths: Kim Seongsuk recalled the youths believed that they would be anachronistic if they did not speak of socialism.[17] He also spoke of popularity of anarchism in the early 1920s among Korean radicals:[18]

> At that time, books on socialism were almost all translations by Japanese socialists. I read the books by Sakai Toshihiko and Yamakawa Hitoshi. A book among others that still remains in my memory is Yamakawa's *The Apparatus of Capitalism* published in 1923... On the other hands, anarchism was the most popular one among all the isms. I think, all of the leftist ideas were infused in it [anarchism]. For anarchism, I read Kropotkin's *Confession* [i.e. *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*]. This was a very good book for [the understanding of] socialism.

Reading anarchist works was important for Korean radicals' understanding of anarchism, as well as their conversion to it. We see from the above quote the influence of Japanese translations on the spread of socialism, including anarchism, and the popularity of anarchism, especially the works of Kropotkin.[19] In fact "Peter Kropotkin was the most important anarchist theoretician to have widespread influence in East Asia",[20] mainly because his mutual aid idea offered an alternative to Social Darwinism.

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[14] Wales and Kim, *Song of Ariran*, 139.

[15] Kim Hakjun (ed.), with interviews by Lee Chong-sik, *Hyeongmyeonggadeul ui hang'il hoesang: Kim Seongsuk, Jang Geonsang, Jeong Hwaam, and Yi Ganghun ui dongnib tujaeng* ("Revolutionaries' Recollections of Anti-Japanese Struggles: Struggles for Independence by Kim Seongsuk, Jang Geonsang, Jeong Hwaam, and Yi Ganghun"), Seoul: Mineumsa, 1988, 40–41. This text is hereafter abbreviated as *HEHH*.

[16] Choi Gabryong, *Eoneu hyeongmyeongga ui ilsaeng* ("A Revolutionary's Life"), Seoul: Imun chulpansa, 1995, 157–158.

[17] Quoted in Yi Horyong, *Han'guk*, 166.

[18] *HEHH*, 46, 49.

[19] *HAU*, 296–297.

[20] Arif Dirlik, "Anarchism in East Asia", *Encyclopedia Britannica* from *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* (accessed January 10, 2005).

Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young*, in particular, was quite influential among Korean radicals. Shin Chae-ho (1880–1936), a prominent Korean anarchist in 1920s China suggested in an essay in *Dong'a Ilbo* ("East Asian Daily") on 2 January 1925 that Korean youths should "become baptized by Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young*", which, he insisted, was "the right prescription for a disease" they suffered.[21] Yi Yongjun (1905–?) was attracted to anarchism through readings of Ōsugi Sakae's translations of Kropotkin, among which *An Appeal to the Young* apparently impressed him deeply.[22] He was a member of two anarchist organisations in early 1930s China: the Alliance of Korean Youths in South China (*Namhwa hanin yeonmaeng*), and the Federation to Save the Nation through Anti-Japan (*Hang'il guguk yeonmaeng*), both of which are discussed later. Shin was also absorbed with reading the works of Liu Sifu (1884–1915, known as Shifu), the "soul of Chinese anarchism",[23] and Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911), a leading Japanese anarchist: these, Shin thought, were best for understanding anarchism.[24]

Unsurprisingly, Japanese anarchist Ōsugi Sakae (1885–1923) had a profound influence on Korean radicals, for, as Thomas Stanley has suggested, he had a great impact on "a wider audience".[25] In the early 1920s, Choi Jungheon (1902–?) and other Korean students in Japan engaged in reading Ōsugi's works, which convinced him that a labour movement based on anarchist principles was the path to social revolution.[26] Ōsugi's work, *A Mind in Search of Justice* (*Seigi o matomeru kokoro*) remained in the memory of Choi Gabryong, who organised a "reading circle" (*dokseo hoe*) in Tokyo in 1924, which included this work in its reading list.[27]

Ōsugi's influence among, and inspiration for, Korean radicals in Japan was not surprising given that Ōsugi himself supported Korea's independence. He hurrahed (*banzai*) three times for Korea's independence at a reception held to welcome Yeo Unhyeong (1888–1947), who came to Japan as an official representative of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai at the invitation of the Japanese authorities;[28] some of the Korean anarchists based in China were associated with that Government.

Korean anarchists were not merely the readers of Chinese and Japanese anarchist works, or of their translations. They had their own anarchist writings as well as Korean translations of works by, for example, Mikhail Bakunin, Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, and Élisée Reclus, sometimes with annotations.[29] This is an indication of their own participation in the production and reproduction of anarchist discourses and languages.

Although few of these writings and translations have survived, and most are not available today, Korean anarchists' participation in the (re)production of anarchist discourses and language (and in activities, as well) led to their participation in the production of common radical visions and cultures bent on anarchist principles with other anarchists. Evidently, Korean anarchists

[21] Shin Chaeho, "Nanggaek ui sinnyeon manpil" ("A Miscellaneous Writing by a Man of Nonsense and Emptiness on the Occasion of a New Year"), in An Byeongjik (ed.), *Shin Chaeho*, Seoul: Han'gilsa, 1979, 180.

[22] *HAU*, 378, 380.

[23] Edward S. Krebs, *Shifu: Soul of Chinese Anarchism*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

[24] Shin testified to this at his trial later in 1929: see *HAU*, 141–142, 315.

[25] Thomas A. Stanley, *Ōsugi Sakae, Anarchist in Taisho Japan: The Creativity of the Ego*, Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982, ix.

[26] HAU, 284–285.

[27] Choi Gabryong, *Eneu hyeongmyeongga*, 19, 157.

[28] Kim Samung, *Bak Yeol pyeongjeon* ("A Commentary Biography of Bak Yeol"), Seoul: Garam gihoek, 1996, 55.

[29] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 11. Also see the translation of Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young into Korean* by Maegwan (Yi Eulgyu), carried in *Talhwan* ("The Conquest"), 1 (June 1, 1928): 5–8.

were not the initial producers of these discourses and languages: for example, the language of revolution was contributed by the "Paris Chinese anarchists", while the problem of modernity was wrestled with by the "Tokyo Chinese anarchists".[30] The point here is the significance of the interaction itself, and the resulting mutual inspiration and influence among East Asian anarchists in the rise of anarchism in East Asia.

This mutual inspiration and influence could be seen at various levels of interaction. Ōsugi's extreme commitment to individual rebelliousness and liberation led him to claim to believe in "[n]o creed, no ism, no theory" and thus, ironically, to his claimed antipathy against anarchism itself: he wrote in 1918 that "For some reason, I hate anarchism a bit".[31] This kind of ambivalent attitude toward anarchism may have had an influence on Bak Yeol (1902–1974), whose conversion to anarchism was decisively influenced by Ōsugi (as well as Iwasa Sakutarō, of whom more below): Bak, on trial in the mid-1920s with his Japanese comrade and lover Kaneko Fumiko (1903–26) for an alleged plot against the Japanese throne, stated he was not so much an anarchist as a "nihilist".[32]

Similarly, the split in the Japanese anarchist movement between the "pure anarchists" represented by Hatta Shūzō (1886–1934),[33] and the anarcho-syndicalists represented by Ishikawa Sanshirō (1876–1956), had a significant impact upon Korean anarchists in Japan, who replicated the split. The Korean anarchists in Korea itself were also under the influence of the trends in Japan. Thus, there emerged a tendency toward anarcho-syndicalism among the Korean anarchists in Korea, while the Korean anarchists in China were mostly critical of anarchosyndicalism, like the "pure anarchists". The main current in Korean anarchism in Japan gradually shifted in the 1920s to pure anarchocommunism, with its focus on the mutual aid idea. But this does not mean anarcho-syndicalism disappeared from the Korean anarchist movement that operated in Japan. On the contrary, unionization activities amongst Korean workers in Japan by Korean anarchists continued until the 1930s, as Kim Taeyeob's (1902–?, discussed below) union activities demonstrate.[34]

Exposed to and accepting anarchism, Korean anarchists prioritized Korea's independence in their ideas and activities. Many have testified to this aspect of Korean anarchism. Nationalism or at least national sentiments, in other words, was the main force that drew them to anarchism. Yi Hoiyeong (1867–1932), "the pioneer of Korean anarchism",[35] and active in 1920s China, stated unequivocally in 1925 his motive for becoming an anarchist: "From a contemporary perspective of thoughts, my idea and plan for the realization of Korea's independence are coincident with those of anarchism".[36]

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[30] For a detailed discussion of Chinese "Paris" and "Tokyo" anarchists, see Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, chapter 3.

[31] John Crump, *Hatta Shūzō and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, 33–35 and Peter Duus and Irwin Schneider, "Socialism, Liberalism, and Marxism, 1901–1931" in Peter Duus (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, volume 6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 696–697.

[32] Kim Samung, *Bak Yeol*, 89, 99, 102. Bak was arrested by the Japanese police with Kaneko in the aftermath of the Kantō Great Earthquake of 1923 for their alleged plot to assassinate the Japanese Emperor. Kaneko died in prison, while Bak was later released.

[33] Crump, *Hatta Shūzō*, 82.

[34] Yi Horyong, *Han'guk*, 233–246; Kim Taeyeob, *Tujaeng gwa jeung'eon* ("Struggle and Testimony"), Seoul: Pulbit, 1981, Ch. 3.

[35] Hankyoreh sinmunsa (ed.), *Balgul: Han'guk hyeondaesa inmul* ("Excavations: Persons in Modern Korean History"), Seoul: Hankyoreh simunsa, 1992, 42.

[36] *HAU*, 137.

Similarly, Jeong Hwaam (1896–1981), a leading Korean anarchist in 1920s and 1930s China, recalls two elements that attracted the Koreans exiled in China, including himself, to anarchism: their resistance to Japanese imperialism in order to secure independence, and their adoration for "communism [sic.]", with the emphasis on the former. To him, anarchism "sounded good anyway at first" more emotionally than theoretically, but he was particularly attracted to it because of his "instinctive nationalist impulse" to resist Japan, and became convinced that the final goal of the anarchist movement was "independence through anti-Japan".[37] This suggests that his conversion to anarchism was driven primarily by his national aspiration for independence.[38] Anti-colonialism was integral to the emergence of nationalism in colonies like Korea (and semi-colonies like China as well).

National feeling acted as the initial and decisive force drawing Korean radicals and independence activists in China and Japan towards anarchism. However, they eventually had to face the question of how to deal with the universal messages and transnational concerns of anarchism while still prioritizing their national goal, independence. This question arose particularly as they came to better understand the nature of the contemporary world, leading them to set goals beyond mere independence.

Jeong Hwaam, for instance, recalled how he and other Korean anarchists, such as the Yi brothers—Yi Eulgyu (1894–1972) and Yi Jeonggyu (1877–1984)—and Yu Jamyeong (1894–1985), realized that it was necessary to clarify "the objectives of nation-building" with the use of a "non-theoretical ideology [sic.]" for the independence movement.[39] This kind of realization was probably due to the fact that they read anarchism not only as an idea for achieving independence, but also with reference to the type of new society to be built after independence. Here, concerns going beyond national boundaries and nationalist concerns that arose from their transnational contacts and sources played a role in broadening Korean anarchism beyond the question of independence.

Again, Jeong Hwaam's case offers a good example. Between late 1924 and early 1925, Jeong saw female Chinese workers maltreated at a British-owned factory in Shanghai. He began to "feel" that the goal of national liberation of all oppressed peoples was the same as the goal of the Korean independence movement. Then his "feeling" developed ultimately into the concrete conclusion that the removal of the social and economic contradictions of capitalism, including excessive work hours and the unequal treatment of workers, was the goal of the anarchist movement. Understanding the social problems and ills of capitalist society, he was finally prompted to actively support the activities of Chinese and Taiwanese anarchists.[40] Thus, the maltreatment of the workers raised questions for Jeong about the plight of all the downtrodden masses in the capitalist system, which in turn helped him raise issues of social justice and economic inequality in both colonial and semi-colonial societies under capitalism. As he became aware of these issues, there generated in his mind a sense of the common fate of (semi-)colonized peoples, from which followed the need to work jointly with other anarchists and workers.

In fact, Yi Hoiyeong had already realized these points, and thus proposed that Korean anarchists participate in the movement of Chinese anarchists, and *vice versa*, and develop close con-

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[37] *HAU*, 137; *HEHH*, 277.
[38] *HEHH*, 50, 371–372.
[39] *HEHH*, 267. Jeong does not mention what the objectives were.
[40] Jeong Hwaam, *Yi joguk eodiro gal geosinga: na ui hoegorok* ("Where Will This Motherland Head? My Memoirs"), Seoul: Jayu mun'go, 1982, 65–66, 69–70.

nections between the two through reciprocal cooperation.[41] Cooperation, of course, might have been of dire necessity—particularly to the Korean anarchists, as expatriates, looking to survive and carry out pro-independence activities in foreign regions. But at the same time, it was seen as necessary for the implementation of shared anarchist ideals after the exposure of the contemporary world, with the social evils of capitalism as well as colonialism. In short, independence was the primary, but certainly not the sole nor the ultimate, goal of Korean anarchists' discourses and activities.

In this process, Korean anarchists inevitably had to confront the tension between anarchism as a universal idea that, according to Yi Jeonggyu, promised as its ultimate goal a world of "Great Unity" (*daedong* in Korean, *datong* in Chinese), i.e. a cosmopolitan world,[42] and their national aspirations to achieve the immediate goal of retaking independence from Japanese imperialism. Anarchist Sim Yongcheol (1914–?) described the tension in the following terms:[43]

> Since Korean anarchists were slaves who lost their country, they had to rely with affection on nationalism and patriotism, and thus had difficulties in practice in discerning what their main idea was and what their secondary idea was. The reason [for the difficulties] was due to that their enemy was the only one: Japanese imperialism. My life is one that has drifted along with this kind of contradiction inside.

What we see here is a combination of the universal ideal and the nationalist goal, with which Sim lived, which was indicative of the complex relationship (in Sim's words, the "contradiction") in semi-colonial contexts between national consciousness and transnational concerns.

In his memoirs, Kim Gwangju, a member of the Alliance of Korean Youths in South China (see below), also informs us of the "contradiction" experienced by Korean youths, himself among them, in Shanghai in the early 1930s. Kim Gwangju notes that they began to call into question the very existence and meaning of their "motherland" (*joguk*), but still had to deal with the "vague" goal of national independence and the issue of their survival there under Japan's tight surveillance.[44] It is noteworthy that some Korean anarchists based in Japan in the 1930s shared this understanding of the idea of the "motherland", considering it ruling class propaganda.[45]

Yi Jeonggyu, known in the 1920s as a "forcible anarchist writer",[46] also described his life as characterised by this tension. However, in his case, he shifted further towards anarchism, which offered a vision of social revolution, rather than simply a political revolution that aimed only at independence. He explains this shift, and the complexity of his life, in the following:[47]

> The first half of my life went through [both] a life for struggle and a personal course (*yeokjeong*) for the independence movement, but then turned towards [a life for] a

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[41] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 50.

[42] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 56.

[43] Sim Yongcheol, "Na ui hoego" ("My Memoirs") in Sim Yonghae and Sim Yongcheol, *20 segi jungguk joseon jok yeoksa jaryojip* ("Historical Materials on the Koreans in China in the Twentieth Century"), Seoul: Jungguk joseon minjok munhwa yesul chulpansa, 2002, 300, 511.

[44] Kim Gwangju, "Sanghae sijeol hoesanggi" ("Recollections of My Days in Shanghai"), *Sedae* ("Generation") 3: 11, December 1965, 267.

[45] Hwang, "Beyond Independence", 16–17.

[46] Quoted in Oh Janghwan, "Yi Jeonggyu", 178.

[47] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 11.

social thought and a social revolutionary movement. Indeed it was a life as one of the pioneers who were indulged in anarchism, that is, no-government movement (*mujeongbu juui undong*), which had been viewed in this world, without any good reason, as too extreme.

Thus, the immediate and primary goal of all Korean anarchists was to regain independence from Japan, to which Yi, as well as Kim Gwangju and Sim Yongcheol, devoted themselves. However, as they all recalled, they often began to move gradually beyond the goal of developing a "political" independence movement, towards the realization of anarchist ideals that (particularly in Yi's case) inevitably embraced the dimensions of a social revolution. Some Korean anarchists based in Japan, like Bak, identified the Koreans in Japan as well as the Japanese masses as part of a "warm hearted humanity" in the same socially "weak group" opposed to the rulers.[48]

The tension or "contradiction" between nationalism and anarchism arose precisely when this kind of transnational connection was made. Korean anarchists, in short, were not preoccupied only with nationalism and independence, but were also concerned with—often even more—with transnational and universal problems and concerns.

While some Korean anarchists inclined towards nationalism alone, others emphasized anarchism. This depended on their location, circumstances and so on, resulting in a seemingly noticeable difference among Korean anarchists regarding their attitude to nationalism. For example, many Korean anarchists in China actively engaged in national struggles against Japan—probably because of the vital joint struggle alongside the Chinese against the Japanese invasion of China—those in Japan were by-and-large critical of the whole nationalist movement, possibly because the immediate target, in their joint activities with the Japanese anarchists, was the Japanese government itself.

Korean anarchists in joint activities

Once converted to anarchism, Korean anarchists in Japan started to engage in organising themselves, as well as participating in various joint activities with their counterparts in Japan. There is no doubt that they shared common ideals and visions with the latter. Likewise, many Japanese anarchists, including Ōsugi, Iwasa, Sakai Toshihiko (1870–1933), and Takatsu Seido (1893–1974), provided sponsorship and support to the Japan-based Korean anarchists' efforts to set up organisations and undertake actions, besides which they jointly published many anarchist publications.

The Fraternal Society of Koreans (*Joseonin chinmokhoe*), the "first anarchism-oriented Korean organisation in Japan", was established in Osaka in 1914. The key role was played by Jeong Taesin, who had been converted to anarchism through his relationship with various Japanese anarchists. The Society held regular meetings with the help and support of the Japanese anarchists.[49]

To take the case of Kim Taeyeob, a prominent anarchist labour activist and organiser in 1920s and 1930s Japan, it was through the "Open Lectures on Labour" that he attended in the early 1920s (organised by Japanese socialists and anarchists) that he learned to identify the national struggle against imperialism with the cause of the labour movement, and, accordingly, developed a class consciousness as well as a national consciousness. Learning from the "Open Lectures", he

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[48] Hwang, "Beyond Independence", 12.
[49] Yi Horyong, *Han'guk*, 70 fn. 117, 114–116.

soon developed his own two social categories for Korean society: the nation (*minjok*) and the working people (*geullo daejung*). While Kim Taeyeob's activity was mostly in the Korean labour movement in Japan, in 1926 he also organised a Korean anarchist organisation in Japan called *Chigasei sha* (the "Voice of Self Society").[50]

The Black Wave Society (*Heukdo hoe*), the first Korean anarchist organisation in Tokyo, was established in November 1921 with sponsorship from Japanese anarchists.[51] The organisation had its organ the *Black Wave*, published in July 1922 in Japanese; Bak Yeol was editor-in-chief and publisher. The journal, eschewing nationalism, promoted a cosmopolitan idea of amalgamating Japan and Korea, and an amalgamated world, which was probably a factor in Kaneko Fumiko, a Japanese nihilist or anarchist, joining the Korean-led organisation.[52] The Black Movement Society (*Heuksaek undongsa*), organised in 1926 by Korean anarchists in Japan such as Choi Gyujong (1895–?), Yi Honggeun (1907–?), Jang Sangjung (1901–1961) and Won Simcahng (1906–1971), regularly held meetings to study the theories of anarchism. Invited speakers for the meetings included Japanese anarchists like Iwasa, Ishikawa, and Mochizuki Katsura (1887–1975), with Hatta Shūzō as the primary lecturer.[53] In fact, many Korean anarchists participated in Japanese anarchists' activities and subscribed to Japanese anarchist journals including *Kokushoku seinen* ("Black Youth"), *Kōsaku* ("Tenant Farming"), and *Rōdō Undō* ("Labour Movement").[54]

The Black Movement Society was a registered member of the Japanese Black Youth League (*Nihon kokushoku seinen renmei*), and, according to Yi Honggeun, attempted to build a communication network among the East Asian anarchists in order to increase their interactions.[55] No concrete evidence survives to validate the existence of the network, but it seems that there was a similar kind of network that *did* work effectively. Kim Taeyeob, whose anarchist labour movement activities were mainly limited to Tokyo and Osaka in the mid 1920s, was, to his surprise, formally invited to the congress of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (*Zhonghua minguo zonggonhui*), which took place in Shanghai on May Day 1925. There, Kim Taeyeob met many labour activists from across the world, including Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders like Liu Shaoqi (1898–1969).[56] Kim Taeyeob's activities in Japan must have been known to the Chinese through some kind of information network.

As the Korean anarchists based in China began to organise themselves, they set two goals— independence *and* establishing a new society founded upon anarchist ideals and principles—and for both they proposed and actively engaged in joint activities with anarchists in China. One of the earliest cases was the Yi brothers' association with Chinese Esperantists. According to a Chinese police report for the Beiyang warlord government in Beijing, dated June 5, 1922, the

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[50] Kim Taeyeob, *Tujaeng*, 47, 50–51, 53, 62, 74, 86 and 159; Nihon anakzumu undo jinmei jiden hensan iinkai ed., *Nihon anakizumu undō jinmei jiden* ("Biographical Dictionary of the Japanese Anarchist Movement"), Tokyo: Poru shuppan, 2004, 219.

This text is hereafter abbreviated as *NAUJJ*.

[51] Yi Horyong, *Han'guk*, 126; Oh Janghwan, *Han'guk anakijeum undongsa* ("A History of the Korean Anarchist Movement"), Seoul: Gukak jaryoweon, 1998, 94.

[52] Kaneko Fumiko (trans. by Jean Inglis), *The Prison Memoirs of a Japanese Woman*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1991, 217, 242–243 and Hwang, "Beyond Independence", 12, 13.

[53] Oh Janghwan, *Han'guk anakijeum*, 105.

[54] For more on this, see Hwang, "Beyond Independence" and *NAUJJ*, 775, 777.

[55] Ibid., 106; Komatsu Ryūji, *Nihon anakizumu undōshi* ("A History of the Japanese Anarchist Movement"), Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1972, 198.

[56] Kim Taeyeob, *Tujaeng*, 151–153.

Association for the Study of the World Language (i.e. Esperanto) in China (*Shijieyu xuehui*) had just held a meeting over tea. The purpose of the meeting was to welcome a Japanese "communist" (sic) and two Koreans, Yi Jeonggyu and Yi Byeonggyu (i.e. Yi Eulgyu). A Chinese representative of the Association delivered a welcoming address, in which he explained to the attendees the current situation of the "Chinese anarchist group" (*Zhongguo wuzhengfu dang*) in various locations in China. This was followed by a warm response by Yi Jeonggyu. Yi Jeonggyu, thanking the Chinese present, stated that all Koreans wished to recover Korea's national sovereignty and land, and thus strove for national liberation without any fear of sacrificing themselves. Yi then briefly expressed his hope that youths in China, Japan and Korea could be united in order to move forward. The meeting decided, according to the report, that those present from the three countries would get permission from their respective comrades to look into the possibility of convening a conference for all, at one place.[57]

Another early example was the Black Flag League (*Heukgi yeonmaeng*). This was organised in October 1924 by Korean and Chinese anarchist students at Beijing Minguo University, with the sponsorship of Chinese anarchists Zhang Ji (1882–1947), Li Shizeng (1881–1973), Wu Zhihui (1865–1953), and Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940).[58] Although not much information about the League survives, the activities of Yu Seo (1905–1980), one of the Korean members, clearly shows joint activity.

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[57] Zhongguo dier lishi dang'anguan ed., *Zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi he Zhongguo shehuidang* ("Chinese anarchism and the Chinese Socialist Party"), n.p.: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1981, 160–161. This text is herafter abbreviated to *ZWZHZS*.

[58] Jo Sehyun, "1920 nyeondae jeonbangi jae jungguk han'in anakijeum undong— hanjung anakiseuteu ui gyoryu reul jungsim euro" ("The Korean Anarchist Movement in the Early 1920s—Focusing on the Interactions between Korean and Chinese Anarchists"), in *Han'guk geunhyeondaesa yeongu* ("Studies on Korean Modern and Contemporary History") 25, 2003, 367.

Fig. 2. Members of the Korean Anarchist Federation pose with Chinese comrades involved in a peasant self-management initiative, Pukeun province, China ca. 1927–1928.

Yu was born and bred in Korea but became a Chinese citizen in 1916, where he participated actively in many Chinese anarchist activities. In 1925, he took part in the establishment of the Society of the Masses (*Minzhong she*). In 1928 he was involved in a key debate between the Young Chinese Anarchist Federation (*Xiaonian zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi lianmeng*) and the Chinese Marxists, where he defended the "literature of the masses" (*minzhong wenxue*) alongside Chinese anarchists like Mao Yipo (1901–1996) and Lu Jianbo (1904–1990). He also took part in the publication of many Chinese anarchist literary journals.[59] For a Taiwanese anarchist group he wrote an article entitled "A Revolutionary Strategy of Powerless Peoples" (*Ruoshao minzu de geming celue*) which called for the establishment of a solid, revolutionary organisation for freedom and the liberation of all "powerless peoples" while denouncing any kind of "political" movement in the colonies that aimed primarily at political independence without social transformation.[60]

Sim Yonghae (1904–1930), another Korean student at Beijing Minguo University, served as an editor of the *Guofeng ribao* ("National Customs Daily"), published by the Chinese anarchist Jing Meijiu (1882–1959). Sim himself published the journal *Goryeo cheong-nyeon* ("Korean Youth", *Gaoli qingnian* in Chinese) in China in the winter of 1924, to which prominent Chinese anarchist Li Feigan (known as Bajin, 1904–2005) contributed anarchist writings.[61]

The Korean anarchists in China also learned more about anarchism, and the world situation, through interactions with other anarchists. Vasilij Eroshenko (1889–1952), a blind Russian anarchist and poet, was one such figure. He visited China in the early 1920s after having been deported from Japan for his propagation of "a dangerous idea", and he propagated cosmopolitan ideas.[62] Interactions with Eroshenko seem to have deeply influenced the Korean anarchists, particularly with regard to Esperanto and cosmopolitanism.[63] Yi Jeonggyu, in fact, became an anarchist after being inspired by Eroshenko.[64] Similarly, Korean anarchists in China like Jeong Hwaam learned about the political realities of Soviet Russia after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution—in particular the communists' purge of the anarchists—from Eroshenko. After a series of meetings with Eroshenko they became very aware of what Leninist communism in the Soviet Union entailed, firmly convincing them to aim at securing independence based on anarchist principles of social revolution.[65]

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[59] "Fangwen Fan Tianjun xiansheng de jilu" ("Records of a visit to Mr. Fan Tianjun") in Ge Maochun, Jiang Jun and Li Xingzhi (eds.), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliao xuan* ("Collected Materials on Anarchist Ideas"), 2 vols., Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1984, 1043, 1066; *NAUJJ*, 712, 772. The debate was over the question of whose literary writings, Marxist or anarchist, could represent the masses in China. The Ge Maochun *et al* text is hereafter referred to as *WZSX*

[60] Yang Bichuan, *Riju shidai Taiwan fankang shi* ("A History of Taiwanese Resistance against Japanese Occupation"), Taipei: Daoxiang chubanshe, 1988: 172–173. Taiwanese anarchists also seemed to reject any "political" movement in favor of social revolution. See ibid., 161–174.

[61] *NAUJJ*, 335.

[62] For Eroshenko's activities in China, see Xiaoqun Xu, "Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Transnational Networks: The *Chenbao Fujuan*, 1921–1928", *The China Review*, 4: 1, 2004, 154–161.

[63] Bak Hwan, *Sikminji*, 19, 26.

[64] Quoted in Oh Janghwan, "Yi Jeonggyu", 184–185.

[65] *HEHH*, 292.

A different kind of relationship and inspiration can be also found in the case of Sim Yonghae. While working for the *Guofeng ribao*, he became acquainted with two Japanese anarchists at the paper, with whom he agreed that their common enemy was Japanese imperialism, and shared the cosmopolitan idea of "Great Unity": "All under Heaven (*tianxia*) comprises one family and the whole world (*sihai*) is full of whole brothers".[66] Sim's younger brother, Sim Yongcheol (1914–?), developed fraternal relationships with two Taiwanese anarchists, Fan Benliang (1895/1897/1906–1945) and Lin Bingwen (1897– 1945),[67] while studying; he also made friends with a younger brother of Ho Chi Minh.[68] Suffice it to say that the interactions between the Korean and other anarchists in China generated mutual influence and inspiration.

Korea anarchists in educational and popular militia projects

Education provided another important site of interaction between Korean and other anarchists in China. Lida College (*Lida xueyuan*) provides the first case. Lida College was established in Shanghai by the Hunanese anarchist Kuang Husheng (1891–1933) and operated for about ten years—from the early 1920s until the Japanese attack on Shanghai in 1932. As "the immediate precedent" for the Shanghai Labour University (*Shanghai laodong daxue*, see below), it became "an esteemed example for many of what an institution for alternative education could accomplish".[69]

With its main offices at Jiangwan in Shanghai, Lida College hired anarchists for the teaching staff in the Department of Rural Village Education (*Nongcun jiaoyuke*), part of its senior middle school. Korean anarchist Yu Jamyeong taught agriculture and Japanese language in this department, and students received an education that combined schooling with productive labour, including poultry farming, beekeeping and fruit growing. The department gradually became a gathering place for anarchists, leading Lida College to be called "a home for anarchists".[70] Due to Yu, several Korean students were enrolled at Lida College, which therefore also became a "gath-

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[66] Sim Yongcheol, "Na ui hoego", 93.

[67] *HAU*, 308, 312. Fan was a student at Meiji University in Japan, where he became an anarchist under Ōsugi Sakae's influence. He organised the New Taiwanese Anarchist Society (*Xin taiwan anshe*) in Beijing, which published *Xin Taiwan* ("New Taiwan") in December 1924. For Fan's activities, see Yang Bichuan, *Riji*, 161–174; *NAUJJ*, 525. Lin's name, along with those of Korean anarchists, appears in the brief English article "Information about Korean Anarchist Activities", carried on the last page of the first issue (June 1, 1928) of *Talhwan* ("The Conquest"), a Korean anarchist journal published in China.

[68] Sim Yongcheol, "Na ui hoego", 133, 202–203.

[69] Ming K. Chan and Arif Dirlik, *Schools into Fields and Factories: Anarchists, the Guomindang, and the National Labour University in Shanghai, 1927–1932*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1991, 42, 43. Unlike the National Labour University, (see below) however, Lida College was an independent educational institution, free of *Guomindang* influence. In fact, its curriculum was radically different, as criticism of Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles (*Sanmin zhuyi*), for example, was allowed; therefore, there was no worship of Sun at the college. See Tamagawa Nobuaki, *Chūgoku anakizumu no kage* ("Shades of Chinese Anarchism), Tokyo: Sanichi Shobō, 1974, 104 and Zheng Peigang, "Wuxhengfu zhuyi zaizhongguo de ruogan shishi" ("Some Facts about Anarchist Movements in China") in *WZSX*, 969.

[70] Yu Jamyeong, *Yu Jamyeong sugi: han hyeogmyeong ja ui hoeeokrok* ("Yu Jamyeong's Memoirs: A Revolutionary's Memoirs"), Cheon'an: Dongnib ginyeomgwan han'guk dongnip undongsa yeon'guso, 1999, 205–208.

ering place" for the Korean anarchists.[71] It was, in particular, a base in the early 1930s for Korean anarchist activities led by the Alliance of Korean Youths in South China (see below).[72]

According to Korean sources, a bookstore in Shanghai run by Chen Guangguo functioned as a place for contact and communication among anarchists, as well as for book exchanges. Another anarchist gathering place in Shanghai was the Huaguang Hospital (*Huaguang yiyuan*) in the French Concession: this private hospital was established by the Chinese anarchist Deng Mengxian in the early 1920s, and it lasted until the 1930s. The Hospital served as a place for communication, contact, and refuge not only for Chinese anarchists like Bajin, Mao Yipo, Lu Jianpo but also for other East Asian anarchists, including Koreans. Deng had established a good relationship with Japanese anarchists when he studied abroad in Japan, and he now allowed his hospital to operate as a hub for all the anarchists. It was at the Huaguang Hospital that Yu Jamyeong became acquainted with Bajin and numerous other Chinese anarchists. There, he also met Japanese anarchist Sano Ichirō (then using his Chinese name, Tian Huamin). Jeong Hwaam met the Japanese anarchist Shiroyama Hideo (1901–1982) at the hospital, and the two developed a plan to threaten the Japanese Consul-Generals in Shanghai in order to expose their corruption. Jeong also became acquainted there with Japanese anarchists, Akagawa Haruki (1906–1974, a deserter from the Japanese army) and Take Riyōji (1895–?). These two also joined the plan (which ultimately failed).[73]

At the invitation of Chinese anarchists, Korean anarchists joined in the establishment of the Shanghai National Labour University, which was funded by, and under the control of the Nationalist Party, the *Guomindang*. This was "a Chinese instance of socialist experiments with alternative education that have sought a means to the creation of socialism through the integration of labour and education".73 Shen Zhongjiu (1887–1968, "one of the anarchists instrumental in founding" the Labour University),[74] and Wu Kegang (1903–1999) invited the Yi brothers to participate as guest members in the preparation of the launch, from the early planning to the founding. Yi Jeonggyu took a faculty position as lecturer, although he did not have a chance to teach, as he soon had to leave in order to join in the Movement for Rural Self-Defence Communities in Quanzhou (of which more below).[75] Jeong Hwaam "used to go" to the Labour University where he "studied labour issues", although it is unclear whether he was formally enrolled as a student.[76] Even though the Labour University was under *Guomindang* control, it had many international faculty including Japanese and French anarchists. For example, Iwasa taught the French Revolution, Ishigawa Sanshirō taught courses on socialism (or the "cultural history of the Orient") and Yamaga Taiji was in charge of teaching Esperanto, which was compulsory.[77] The in-

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[71] Gukka bohuncheo (ed.), *Dongnib yugongja jeung'eon jaryojib* ("A Collection of the Testimonies of Men of Merit for Independence") 1, Seoul: Gukka bohuncheo, 2002, 154, 157.

[72] *HEHH*, 350–351.

[73] *HEHH*, 295, 296; Yu Jamyeong, *Yu Jamyeong sugi*, 208, 291–292; *NAUJJ*, 5, 333; *HAU*, 309. Deng at Huaguang Hospital was the first person Yamaga Taiji contacted when he arrived in Shanghai on a mission to get a passport for Ōsugi Sakae, who was then planning on a trip to Europe to attend a conference of anarchists. Also, when Ōsugi came to Shanghai, he was only able to find and rent a room in the French Concession with Deng's help. See Tamagawa, *Chūgoku*, 98 and Kondō Kenji, *Ichi museifu shugisha no kaisō* ("Memoirs of an Anarchist"), Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1966, 28. 73 Chan and Dirlik, *Schools into Fields*, 3–4.

[74] Ibid., 4.

[75] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 130–137.

[76] *HEHH*, 295.

[77] Tamagawa, *Chūgoku*, 100–102; Bi Xiushao, "Wo xinyang wuzhengfu zhuyi de qianqian houhou" ("Before and After I had Faith in Anarchism"), in *WZSX*, 1032; Kondō, *Ichi Museifu*, 276.

ternational aspect of the Labour University apparently so impressed Korean anarchists that they thought the "representative brains of Far Eastern anarchists" gathered and taught there.[78] It is possible to say, I think, that the Labour University was an East Asian instance—as well as a Chinese instance—of a socialist experiment in alternative education, in which Korean and Japanese anarchists participated.

In addition to Lida College and the Shanghai National Labour University, Chinese anarchists undertook other experiments with new educational institutions and theories, in which Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese anarchists all partook. These included the Dawn Senior Middle School (*Liming gaozhong*), established in 1929, and its sister school, Common People's Middle School (*Pingmin zhongxue*), established a year later. Both were in Quanzhou in Fujian Province. Using the funding from overseas Chinese, the schools shared their facilities and their educational objective: "to cultivate persons of ability through education for living (*shenghuo jiaoyu*), who are to be revolutionary, scientific, socializing, labouring, and artistic". To attain this objective, a "commune system" (*gongshezhi*) was introduced at the Common People's Middle School in order to integrate faculty, students, and labourers into one unit.

Not surprisingly, both schools had anarchists as faculty, including the Korean anarchists Yu Jamyeong, Yu Seo, Heo Yeolchu, Jang Sumin, and Kim Gyuseon; all taught at one or even both of the schools. The Japanese anarchist Yatabe Yuji taught Esperanto as an elective foreign language at the Common People's Middle School. Yu Jamyeong taught biology at Dawn Senior Middle School for a semester in 1929 in place of Chen Fanyu (1901–1941), who had taught "social problems" but soon left to teach at Lida College. Other Dawn Senior Middle School faculty included the Taiwanese Cai Xiaoqian and Zheng Yingbai. Up to the early 1930s, the two schools served as centres for "social movements in Quanzhou" and as the important bases for anarchist projects.[79]

These projects included the Movement for Rural Self-Defence Communities in Quanzhou, conducted, again, under the *Guomindang* banner. This was one of the most significant joint projects by East Asian anarchists in the 1920s, and one in which Korean anarchists seem to have taken a leading role. At the time the area was firmly controlled by the Chinese anarchist Qin Wangshan (1891–1970) under the *Guomindang* banner, with support from Xu Zhuoran, a graduate of Huangpu Military Academy who sympathised with anarchist ideals. In these circumstances, Chinese anarchists from Sichuan, Hunan, and Guangdong provinces were able to take refuge from the *Guomindang's* 1927 purge of the party (*qingdang*). They usually felt safe there, and, as a result, called Quanzhou "a heaven of peace" (*shiwai taoyuan*), meaning a utopia.[80] Quanzhou and

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[78] *HAU*, 298.

[79] Jiang Kang, "Quanzhou mujeongbu juui e daehan chobojeok yeon'gu" ("A Preliminary Examination of the Anarchist Movement in Quanzhou") in Han'guk minjok undongsa yeon'guhoe (ed.), *Han'guk dongnib undong gwa jungguk-1930 nyeondae reul jungsimeuro* ("The Korean Independence Movement and China: the 1930s"), Seoul: Gukak jaryoweon, 1997, 324–325; Yu Jamyeong, *Yu Jamyeong sugi*, 198–201; *NAUJJ*, 336. Not much information is available now about the two schools, including data like the number of students enrolled, their respective curriculum, etc. Cai Xiaoqian was one of the leading figures in the establishment of the *Taihan tongzhi hui* ("The Society of Taiwanese and Korean Comrades") in June 1924, which advocated "an idea to adopt mutual aid between Taiwan and Korea and realize national liberation". See Yang Bichuan, *Riji*, 166.

[80] Qin Wangshan, "Annaqi zhuyi zhe zai fujian de yixie huodong" ("Various Activities of Anarchists in Fujian"), in *Fujian wenshi ziliao* ("Literary and Historical Materials in Fujian") no. 24, 1990, 181; Qin Wangshan, "Chaoxian he riben annaqi zhuyi zhe zai quan binan yinqi de shijian" ("An Incident caused by Korean and Japanese Anarchists who took Refuge in Quanzhou"), *Fujian wenshi ziliao*, no. 24, 1990, 203.

its vicinity were to remain the largest and most active centre of the Chinese anarchist movement between the winter of 1926 and the spring of 1934.[81]

The Chinese anarchists invited both Korean and Japanese anarchists to join the movement. These included Yi Jeonggyu, Yi Eulgyu, Yu Seo, Jeong Hwaam, Iwasa, and Akagawa. While the movement's larger goal was to raise young anarchist leaders to realize anarchist ideals, its immediate goals were to establish a revolutionary base for anarchist activities, and to organise rural people's militia (*mintuan*) by training rural youths to defend their communities from local bandits (*tufei*) and communists.[82] Its goals seem to have at least two precedents: one was the Chinese "Paris" anarchists' preference for a "people's militia" over a regular army, on the grounds that the latter would end up only serving the interests of those in power;[83] the other was the "autonomous village movement", an experiment in Hunan Province in September 1923 by Yi Jeonggyu and Chen Weiguang (or Chen Weiqi) to build an ideal society where land was commonly possessed and cultivated, and the produce were distributed and consumed equally.[84]

Yi Jeonggyu was apparently one of the leading organisers of the Quanzhou movement. He had known Liang Longguang (a leading Chinese anarchist in the movement) personally, since both had participated in the Shanghai General Strike of March 1927. Yi stated that he was initially reluctant to assist Liang and Qin in the movement because of his commitment to the Shanghai National Labour University, but he soon changed his mind. The decision was, in fact, made collectively at a "Five-Person Meeting" held in Iwasa's room at Lida College, and attended by Wu Kegang, Iwasa, Liang, and the Yi brothers. According to Yi's recollection, the meeting granted Yi and Liang responsibility for the Quanzhou movement to educate and organise youths, and he therefore went to Quanzhou in June 1927 with Liang and Qin.

The Korean anarchists Yu Seo and Yi Gihwan later joined, taking responsibility for training and teaching Chinese youths respectively. Yi Jeonggyu himself taught as a faculty member at the Training Centre for Publicity Campaign Personnel at Jinxian County (*Jinxian xuanzhuan yuan yangchengsuo*). The Training Centre was designed to train and educate and make rural youth "cadres" in the rural communities. Yi's courses covered the history of social movements in the West, critiques of communism, "new politics", and organising rural societies, while Yu taught "new economics", sociology, feudal society, and the analysis of capitalist society.[85] Due mainly to their active and wide participation, the Korean anarchists remembered the Quanzhou movement as a joint project run with Chinese anarchists.[86]

The Quanzhou movement prompted the creation of the Agency for Training People's Militias in Quanzhou and Yongchun Counties (*Quanyong ershu mintuan pianlianchu*), under *Guomindang's* auspices. Qin directed the agency, and Korean anarchists took key positions in it: Yi Jeonggyu worked as a secretary of the agency; Yi Eulgyu was one of the two heads of the General Affairs Section; Yu Seo was a member of the Propaganda and Education Section; and Yi Gihwan and Yu Jicheong worked in the Training and Guidance Section. The objectives of the agency were to achieve "a free and autonomous life", "a cooperative labouring life", and "a coop-

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[81] Jiang Kang, "Quanzhou mujeongbu", 312. Note that the aforementioned two schools were located in the area.

[82] Tamagawa, *Chūgoku*, 106.

[83] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 95.

[84] *HAU*, 287–288; *HEHH*, 279; Oh Janghwan, "Yi Jeonggyu", 187–188.

[85] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 133–136.

[86] Jeong Hwaam, *Yi joguk*, 85.

erative defensive life".[87] Ultimately it failed in just ten months due to a lack of funds, the unstable political situation in the Quanzhou area, and a *Guomindang* order to dissolve.[88] The Quanzhou movement's objectives were in accordance with those of the Korean anarchist movement—self-reliance (*jarib*), autonomy (*jachi*), and self-defence (*jawi*)—which helps explain their active participation and key roles in it.[89]

Iwasa's activity in the Quanzhou movement was also significant. During his stay in Quanzhou, Iwasa planned to establish a "Greater Alliance of East Asian Anarchists" (*Dongya wuzhengfu zhuyizhe datongmeng*), which he believed could form a revolutionary base for joint East Asian anarchist struggle against imperialism.[90] It is not clear how he planned to realize his scheme, but the idea itself was not novel, as it had already been suggested by Yu Seo in an article in the Chinese anarchist journal *Minzhong* ("People's Tocsin") on the 15 December, 1926. Yu had called for the establishment, in China, of a Greater Alliance of East Asian Anarchists (*Dongya wuzhengfu zhuyizhe datongmeng*). Arguing that the first step towards anarchist revolution was to launch a movement to liberate colonies, Yu Seo warned that there was a "mad wave" of patriotism among Korean, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese and Taiwanese anarchists. The anarchist movement "must not draw any distinctions among peoples [*minzu*]", so the "mad wave" posed a potential danger to it: it might end up a narrow nationalist movement whose aim was simply political independence. East Asian anarchists thus had a responsibility to "extinguish the mad wave" sweeping the region. He warned that it was crucial for all anarchists to get united otherwise their righteous activities and efforts could be seriously undermined. However, Yu also maintained that Koreans still needed to accomplish the overthrow of Japanese imperialism (i.e. independence) prior to the achievement of a social revolution that transcended national boundaries.[91]

It seems that there was an immediate response to Yu's call (and Iwasa's scheme) from other anarchists. About 60 anarchists from China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and India, representing their respective countries, gathered in Nanjing in September 1927 to organise an Eastern Anarchist League (*Mujeongbu juui dongbang yeonmaeng*). Korean anarchists were represented at the gathering by Shin Chaeho, at the request of the Taiwanese anarchist Lin Bingwen. Several decisions were made at the meeting: the League's headquarters would be in Shanghai; it would build a network of anarchists by connecting them in different countries; and it would publish *Dongbang* ("The East").

The first issue of *Dongbang* appeared on the 20th of August, 1928. Yi Jeonggyu contributed an article entitled "To Inform Eastern Asian Anarchists" (*Dongbang Mujeongbu juuija ege gohanda*), in which he called for the unity and rallying of "Eastern Anarchists", as well as for revolution in Korea. Yi was appointed by the League to serve as a secretary, along with Akagawa, Mao Yipo, and Wang Shuren. After the conclusion of the meeting, Shin and Lin devised a plan to raise funds for the League by printing 200 counterfeit foreign notes. This was suggested by Lin, who was

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[87] Yi Jeonggyu, *Ugwan munjon*, 146–148.

[88] The *Guomindang*'s National Government (*Guomin zhengfu*) in Nanjing was afraid of having two different chains of military command in Fujian, because the Agency for Training People's Militias was under the control of "civilians" (i.e. anarchists). See Tamagawa, *Chūgoku*, 110.

[89] Jeong Hwaam, *Yi joguk*, 86.

[90] Jiang Kang, "Quanzhou Mujeongbu", 317–318; Qin Wangshan, "Chaoxian he riben", 203; "Fangwen Fan Tianjun", 1041.

[91] Yu Seo, "Zhuzhang zuzhi dongya wuzhengfu zhuyizhe datongmeng (jielu)" ("Proposing to Organise the Greater Alliance of East Asian Anarchists" (excerpts)), in *Minzhong* ("People's Tocsin") 16 (December 15, 1926) in *WZSX*, 716–720.

then working at the Foreign Exchange Section of the Beijing Postal Management Department. The plan, however, failed and the pair was arrested by the Japanese police, dying in prison.[92]

The 1930s saw the Korean anarchists organise the Federation to Save the Nation through Anti-Japan in October 1931: this was formed in the French concession in Shanghai, with Chinese and Japanese participation.[93] The Alliance of Korean Youths in South China was organised in response to the new situation created by Japan's all-out invasion of the country. Its declaration reveals interesting aspects of the new society envisioned. Alliance members pledged themselves to build a new Korean society after independence. This could be realised only with the total destruction of social ills like private property and the nationstate, including the "pseudo-morality" of the latter. The new society would be based on absolutely spontaneous alliances among individuals, who would work according to their abilities, and receive in accordance with their needs. In such a society, the declaration explained, cities would have the appearance of farming villages, while villages would have the conveniences of cities. Farming villages and cities alike would be characterised by a scientific combination of agriculture and industry in order to ensure the most effective production. Finally, the declaration argued that such an "artistic" society would have no need for money, as it would be "a society chosen from each individual's free will, and individuals can work freely there". Ultimately, "there will be no distinction between intellectual labour [*jineung nodong*] and physical labour [*geunyuk nodong*]", so "no one would come to dislike working".[94]

The Alliance's goals, reflected in the above declaration, reveal the ideal anarchist society it wanted to construct by social revolution. Of cardinal significance in the declaration are ideas like combining agriculture and industry and combining mental and manual labour, with individual transformation as the point of departure in the project of social change. These ideas had already been widely propagated and professed by the "Paris Chinese anarchists".[95] These ideas were also the ideals of the Shanghai National Labour University and of the educational experiments of Chinese (and other East Asian) anarchists. These ideals and languages were seemingly still alive here, employed by Korean anarchists in 1930s China. There is no concrete evidence explaining why and how the ideas were revived by the Alliance at the time it started armed, terror-oriented struggles against Japan. It is nevertheless revealing that many Koreans in the Alliance had worked with Chinese and Japanese anarchists in joint anarchist projects like Lida College, the Labour University and the Quanzhou movement. It is also revealing that one of the post-1945 Korean anarchist projects promoted (in the 1960s) "domestic industry" in rural villages.[96]

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[92] *HEHH*, 278–281; *HAU*, 312–319.

[93] United in the Federation were Chinese anarchists Wang Yachu (1997–1936) and Hua Junshi, and several Japanese anarchists such as Sano Ichirō and Yatabe Yuji. Although Wang is often described by his contemporaries as a terror-minded "gangster" or a "bandit" (*yumin*), he was in fact an anarchist who worked closely with Korean anarchists in the 1920s and 30s, and was in charge of the "military force section" (*junshibu*) of the Chinese Anarchists Alliance in Shanghai, secretly formed at Huaguang Hospital in 1922. See Zheng Peigang, "Wuzhengfu zhuyi", 965–966; Guo Zhao, "Shenmi de Wang Yachu" ("The Mysterious Wang Yachu"), *Wenshi ziliao xuanji* ("Collected Materials on Literature and History") 19, May 1989, 114–130; Shen Meijuan, "'Ansha dawang' Wang Yachu" ("Wang Yachu, The Great Master of Assassinations"), *Zhuanji wenxue* ("Biographical Literature") 56: 4, April 1990, 120–132; Guan Dexin, "Guan yu 'Ansha dawang Wang Yachu' buzheng ("Supplementary Additions to 'Wang Yachu, The Great Master of Assassinations' "), *Zhaunji wenxue* ("Biographical Literature"), 56:4, April 1990, 119; *HEHH*, 319.

[94] "Seoneon" (Declaration), online at http://www.woodang.or.kr/life/youth.htm, accessed 15 November 2007; Bak Hwan, *Sikminji*, 161–168.

[95] For the Chinese anarchists' ideas, see Chan and Dirlik, *Schools into Fields*.

[96] Gungmin munhwa yeon'guso, *Gungmin munhwa yeonguso*, especially Ch. 3.

Conclusion

As I have demonstrated above, Korean anarchism before 1945 can be best understood as the product of interactions, both direct and indirect, between Korean anarchists and their counterparts in China and Japan. The interactions took the forms of association, affiliation, reading works and translations (mainly by Chinese and Japanese anarchists), and finally, joint activity.

The transnational linkages of Korean anarchism to East Asian anarchism were therefore obvious. More important was mutual influence and inspiration among East Asian anarchists, which helped Korean anarchists not only articulate their national goal, but to realise their common destiny with other anarchists under capitalism and colonialism.

Through such interaction Korean anarchists adjusted, accommodated, and articulated within a colonial situation their national goal as well as the universal messages of anarchism. I argue, therefore, that Korean anarchism needs to be understood in a broader regional context that underlines interactions among anarchists in the area—rather than in narrow nationalist accounts or from a Eurocentric perspective—in order to underscore its interactive and transnational aspects at its inception and rise.

It is arguable that the influence and inspiration of Chinese and Japanese anarchists on Korean anarchists during their interactions were instrumental in the rise of Korean anarchism. The close association of Korean anarchists in China with the Provisional Government of Korea in Shanghai,[97] for example, may have been a result of the influence of the "Paris Chinese anarchists", who saw revolution as an endless process and therefore viewed the 1911 establishment of a republic in China as a progressive process.[98] On the other hand, the Korean anarchists based in Japan focused more on class struggle and union movements because of their close affiliations with Japanese anarchists.[99] It is, however, unlikely (and I do not suggest it) that the influence and inspiration came only from the Chinese and Japanese anarchists; rather, these influences were mutual and their flow went in both directions.

A regional perspective allows us to see this interactive aspect of Korean anarchism—and of East Asian anarchism more generally. Movements by anarchists in the region, as well as their ideas and languages, formed networks of relationships. Korean anarchism was not the only one constituted by these movements, nor was it simply the product of the Korean anarchists outside the country. It can be argued that there was a mutual contribution made by East Asian anarchists to the rise of anarchism in each East Asian society. It is also important to deal with the complex relationship between nationalism and anarchism in colonial contexts, which is demonstrated in the rise of Korean anarchism. A regional and transnational approach helps us to move away from a Eurocentric understanding of anarchism in both

Western and South Korean scholarship that usually misses the relationship between national consciousness and transnational concerns in the rise of anarchism in colonial and semi-colonial contexts.

This paper, too, suggests a shift in historical perspectives on the study of modern East Asian history away from nation-based ones to a broader regional approach. The Korean acceptance and articulation of anarchism that I have described above, I think, offers a good example of the usefulness of the shift. Korean anarchism before 1945 was not simply a means to achieve the

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[97] Kim Junyeop and Kim Changsuk, *Han'guk gongsanjuui*, 124; Jo Sehyun, "1920 nyeondae", 370.

[98] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 270–271.

[99] Oh Janghwan, *Han'guk anakijeum*, 124.

national goal of independence; Korean anarchists were not wedded only to nationalism. The transnational commitments and regional nature of Korean anarchism, however, does not suggest that Korean anarchists ever gave up their commitment to independence. Rather, it indicates the role of transnationalism played in the formation of national discourses, including the impact of East Asian anarchism as a whole on the rise of Korean anarchism. The national impulse in Korean anarchism is not to be underestimated; it functioned very constructively in the acceptance and articulation of anarchism within the colonial context.

Japan's surrender in 1945 to the Allied Powers did not provide an opportunity for Korean anarchists to realize their ideals, for the situation under the US occupation, the subsequent division of Korea, and the emergence of anti-socialist and pro-American conservative regime in 1948 in South Korea, led them to emphasise the nationalistic and anti-communist aspects of Korean anarchism—if only for survival in the face of the dictatorial and military regimes that ruled until the early 1990s. Many transnational and radical ideals, shared with other anarchists, have, I think, long been put aside.

It may be possible to say that Korean anarchism was, besides its nationalist elements, a mixture of many different anarchist trends, with differences possibly "unnoticed" or disregarded—such as the difference between "pure anarchism" and anarchist syndicalism. In describing Japanese anarchism before 1923, John Crump argued it was striking how "unnoticed" such differences were, and suggested that this may have indicated how "little time" Japanese anarchists had "for pondering over theoretical questions".[100] Given the harsh conditions and various constraints Korean anarchists faced as foreign students and/or exiles in Japan and China, let alone the tight censorship and surveillance by the Japanese police in colonial Korea itself, as well as their immediate focus on independence, Korean anarchists, too, might have spent (or might have wanted to spend) "little time" on theoretical differences. This, in turn, may partly explain the "tension" or "contradiction" many expressed over the national question, as well as complicated process of "selection" from, and articulation of, anarchism. This, of course, is not to suggest that there were no theoretical questions raised and discussed, but to suggest that the complexities and nuances in Korean anarchism were indicative of the national and regional circumstances of which it was a product, which might partly explain the prevailing misunderstanding of Korean anarchism as an "aberration" from anarchism in its European setting.[101]

Finally, the activities and ideas of Korean anarchists I have demonstrated above vindicate, for now, my claim that there were radical, transnational communities of discourse and activity in such locations as Shanghai and Tokyo, where radical ideas and cultures, as well as languages of change, revolution, imperialism, and so forth, were forged, discussed and formed, even experimented upon, although there is certainly scope for more detailed study.

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[100] Crump, *Hatta Shūzō*, 28.
[101] Yi Horyong, Han'guk, 294–314.

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Anarchism and the Question of Place: thoughts from the Chinese experience

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I take up in this discussion some questions thrown up by anarchism as it is transplanted in political, social and cultural/intellectual environments different from the one that gave rise to it in the first place.[1] I will base my discussion for the most part on anarchism in China in the early part of the 20th century, although I will suggest also that what the Chinese experience has to tell us may be of far broader significance. The issue is ultimately the relationship between anarchism and place.

This issue has not received much attention from anarchists, possibly due to the universalistic assumptions of anarchist theory concerning human nature and community, which supposedly are driven by the same forces regardless of place or time. While historically speaking anarchism is clearly a product of European modernity, anarchists have been quick to discover anarchism in all kinds of places, from smallscale tribal societies in Africa to ancient Chinese philosophies. This has served to reinforce anarchist universalism but also rendered anarchism ideologically ahistorical.

Anarchist universalism not only flies in the face of historical evidence, but is no longer tenable at a time when the legacies of universalism are under suspicion due to their entanglement in Eurocentrism. Anarchism is arguably the most consistently (even naively) universalistic of all the intellectual products of Enlightenment thinking in Europe, and needs to confront contemporary challenges to Eurocentrism.

On the other hand, any such confrontation requires also that we recognize problems with the term "Eurocentrism" itself, which is used uncritically as a cliché in much contemporary writing in Cultural Studies. The products of Enlightenment thinking themselves have histories, modified in time and place. Anarchists, like other 19th century radicals, participated in the circulation of people and ideas across the length and breadth of Europe. Nevertheless, two of the greatest thinkers of anarchism, Michael Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin, were themselves products also of Enlightenment thinking as it was filtered through the concerns and experiences of imperial Russia in the middle of the 19th century, and brought their own experiences into their formulations of anarchism.

The anarchism that Chinese intellectuals of the late Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) encountered in the early part of the 20th century was already a product of global circulation, having spilled out of Europe into locations across Asia, Africa and Latin America—most importantly in their case, Japan. This no doubt enhanced the impression of universalism, as it did with other ideas from various forms of socialism to liberalism and conservatism. Nevertheless, we need to be more

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[1] I am grateful to Roxann Prazniak for reading, and commenting on, this article.

closely cognizant of the articulations of anarchism to place (including, ironically, nationalism) in grasping its historical mutations.

My goal here is not to subject anarchism to localized explanations, especially localized explanations of a culturalist sort that give priority to the burdens of the past over the demands of the present. Such explanations, in their efforts to localize anarchism (or any other current of thought), ironically negate the historicity of the intellectual encounter in their very historicism. For the same reason, they also end up erasing the revolutionary impact of the new idea. My concern rather is to look more closely into efforts to domesticate the new idea without erasing its novelty, which required its articulation to local concerns and intellectual legacies. If native experiences shaped the translation of anarchism into local idiom, the very act of translation transformed the local idiom as well. The result was a contemporary structural context that contained the past as a crucial moment but also endowed it with radical new meanings. It is this dialectic that demands closer a ttention not just for purposes of historical explanation but for the social and political implications of anarchism not just then but presently as well.

Anarchism in Eastern Asia: an overview

Anarchism in China is best grasped through a regional perspective that makes it possible to glimpse the many translocal ties within which anarchism flourished for a period of three decades. A recently published study has demonstrated how revolutionaries in Eastern Asia— from Japan and the Philippines through China and Southeast Asia all the way to India-learned the lessons of modern nationalism and revolution not just from their confrontations with Europe and North America, but also from their interactions with one another, producing localized discourses of revolution.[2] In the case of some Eastern Asian societies, most notably, the Chinese, the spread of populations of Chinese origin in the region and beyond (to North America, for instance) rendered radical nationalist politics regional automatically. It is likely that the nationalism of Chinese Overseas influenced nationalist politics in Eastern, especially Southeastern, Asia, which may be deserving of closer attention. Radicals circulating in these areas certainly had occasion for intensified contact with one another, which not only helped the spread of nationalist politics, but also fostered a regional and even an Asian "racial" and cultural consciousness as they became more aware of the similar fate Asians suffered at the hands of Euro/American imperialism.[3]

From the late 19th century into the early twentieth, Tokyo served as a location for radical education and activity that is quite reminiscent of the role played by London for radicals in Europe. Tokyo served as a beacon of modern education within an Eastern Asia that was marked already by uneven development and colonialism. Students and radicals from across Asia (as far away as the Ottoman Empire at the other end of the continent) converged in Tokyo; their interactions fuelling the radicalism that found expression most visibly in nationalism, but also, almost immediately from the first decade of the century, in socialism, beginning with anarchism, and culminating in the ultimate victory of Leninist Marxism in China, Korea and Vietnam.[4] As intraregional interac-

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[2] Rebecca Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002.

[3] For the development of an Islamic "pan-Asianism", see Selcuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900–1945", *American Historical Review*, 109:4, 2004, 1140–1170.

[4] By the 1920s, when reaction in Japan led increasingly to the suppression of radical activity, Shanghai and

tions were of significance in the spread of a revolutionary discourse, radicals also participated in joint revolutionary struggles that sought to achieve liberation from the forces of colonialism and imperialism. Nationalism would ultimately distance radicals in the region from one another, but still allowed for cooperation in the first half of the 20th century in struggles against what they perceived as common national and class enemies.

Anarchism was the dominant ideology during the first phase of socialism in Eastern Asia. Its spread during the first two decades of the 20th century allows a glimpse into the regional dynamics of radicalism. Anarchism provided an alternative to the pervasive social Darwinian ideas of the period with its legitimation of conflict and imperialism. Intellectuals in Japan, China, Vietnam and Korea found hope in the anarchist promise of progress through "mutual aid", which may explain why Piotr Kropotkin was the most important anarchist theoretician to have widespread influence in East Asia. Anarchist intellectuals in turn introduced into radical thinking in East Asia ideas that ranged from universal education to social participation in politics, from the importance of women in society to the contradictions between the family and society, from the ill effects upon society of the separation of manual from mental labour to the necessity of combining agriculture and industry in any viable vision of the future, and, underlying all, a conviction that all politics must in the end be social politics, as all economics must be social economics.

These ideas were encompassed within a notion of social revolution, or, more broadly, of the social, of which the anarchists were the first, and the most enthusiastic, proponents. Among the ideas that anarchists introduced into East Asian thinking that were to have a lasting influence was the idea of "social revolution"; the idea, in other words, that significant political change could not be realized unless it was based on social transformation. While some anarchists were attracted to violence as a means of social transformation, others repudiated violence in favour of peaceful methods, especially universal education. But they all shared a belief that society, and social forces, were determinants of politics, and must provide the point of departure for any meaningful change.

Ideas and values that had their origins in East Asian intellectual and political traditions, that might have helped produce original reformulations of anarchism, were to play little part in the historical development of anarchism in East Asia or elsewhere. This was due mainly to a seeming preference on the part of anarchists (East Asian or otherwise) simply to appropriate those values for anarchism, or, conversely, to appropriate anarchism for East Asian values; rather than to articulate those ideas and values to European anarchist formulations to which they bore some resemblance, but which nevertheless were motivated by different historical and social concerns.

Anarchist ideas when they first appeared in East Asia represented a different comprehension of political space than had existed in East Asian societies earlier. Scholars of anarchism in East Asia have made efforts to locate anarchism within various legacies of the past-from neo-Confucianism to Daoism and Buddhism. Such effort is more a product of a culturalism that pervades studies of East Asia than of a historical accounting for the appearance of anarchism under concrete historical circumstances, that eschews a clear distinction between historical causation, and the appropriation of the past for a historical consciousness that had its sources elsewhere. It not only conflicts with the anarchists' self-images as revolutionaries, but with historical evidence as well. Anarchism, and the social revolutionary consciousness that it promoted, were products of a new

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Guangzhou would seem to have replaced Tokyo as a gathering place for radicals. See the discussion of anarchism and Marxism below.

historical situation created by capitalist modernity, and the political reorganisation it called for in the form of the nation-state. European anarchists such as Kropotkin were among the foremost advocates of Enlightenment promises of science and democracy.

Anarchists in East Asia for the most part subscribed to similar ideas in defiance of native traditions, which brought to them no end of trouble. Where they discovered anarchism in native traditions, it was with a new consciousness of politics that they did so, and it entailed the reinterpretation of the past through the demands and consciousness of the present. In the end, numbers provide the most eloquent testimonial. Despite claims to a Chinese cultural proclivity to anarchism, very few Chinese became anarchists, and anarchism was stigmatized throughout as "dangerous thinking". What is more to the point, is a certain inclination on the part of Chinese (and other Eastern Asian) anarchists to conjoin anarchist ideals to nationalist goals.

All this is quite evident in the unfolding of anarchism in East Asia, which found expression first in Japan, and spread quickly among Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean intellectuals. The history of anarchism in East Asia bears testimonial to the remarkable circulation of ideas in that region, which was facilitated by the circulation of intellectuals themselves and intensified in the early part of this century. In this sense, it is possible to speak of an East Asian regional formation constructed by joint activity and a common discourse. Anarchism, with its repudiation of the nation-state, provided a suitable medium for the expression of regional solidarity.

Consciousness of socialism as a cure to the problems of industrial society appeared first in Japan in the late 1890s, when Japan's industrial development had already brought forth a concern with "social problems". Those who identified themselves as socialists were also concerned, however, with the power of the state as well as with Japanese imperialism in East Asia. It was one of these socialists, Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911), who was the first to declare himself an anarchist. Thrown in jail in early 1905 for his anti-war (the Russo-Japanese War) activities, Kōtoku wrote to a foreign friend that he "had gone [to prison] as a Marxian socialist and returned a radical anarchist".[5] His readings in jail, especially of Kropotkin's works (most importantly, *Fields, Factories, and Workshops*), left a profound impression on him, leading to the transformation. After he was released from jail, Kōtoku left for the San Francisco Bay Area, where he was involved both with radicals (among them, Jean Grave) and radical activities. His experiences in the

United States led him to abandon parliamentary tactics in favour of "direct action". After he returned to Japan in June 1906, Kōtoku was involved in radical social activities (especially the movement triggered by the Ashio Copper Mine treatment of workers, and its pollution of the land), and was also able to sway the newly-founded Japanese Socialist Party to his views on "direct action". His activities ran him afoul of the authorities, who charged him with a conspiracy to assassinate the Meiji Emperor. Kōtoku was executed in early 1911.

It was during this period that anarchism also emerged as a distinct current within the burgeoning socialist movement among Chinese intellectuals.[6] Following the Boxer Uprising in 1900, the Qing Dynastic government sent students abroad in large numbers as part of its reform movement. In 1906–1907, two anarchist groups appeared among these intellectuals abroad, one in Paris, the

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[5] "Letter to Albert Johnson", quoted in F. Notehelfer, *Kōtoku Shūsui: Portrait of a Japanese Radical*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971, 113.

[6] The summary below of anarchism in China draws on three recent studies: Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981; Edward Krebs, *Shifu: Soul of Chinese Anarchism*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998; and Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*, NY: Columbia University Press, 1990.

other in Tokyo. The New World Society, established in Paris in 1906, began in 1907 to publish a journal, *The New Era*, which for the next three years would serve as a major source of anarchist theory, and information on the anarchist movement in Europe.

Its guiding light was Li Shizeng (1881–1954) who had gone to France to study biology, and converted to anarchism through his acquaintance with the family of the French anarchist geographer Elisée Reclus. *The New Era* promoted a revolutionary futuristic anarchism, and was among the first Chinese publications to openly attack native traditions, in particular, Confucianism. An anarchist society established in Tokyo almost simultaneously, the Society for the Study of Socialism, by contrast promoted an anti-modernist anarchism influenced by Leo Tolstoy, and stressed the affinity between anarchism and philosophical currents in the Chinese past, especially Daoism. Led by the classical scholar Liu Shipei (1884–1919) and his wife, He Zhen (?), this society published its own journals, *Natural Justice* and *Balance*. Interestingly, these Tokyo publications evinced a more radical stance on contemporary issues than their counterpart in Paris, especially on issues of anti-imperialism and feminism. The publications also promoted Kropotkin's ideas on the combination of agriculture and industry in social organisation, and the social and ethical benefits of combining mental and manual labour, which were to have a lasting influence in Chinese radicalism. Kōtoku Shūsui was a keynote speaker at the founding conference of the Society for the Study of Socialism.

It was through association with Chinese anarchists in Tokyo that anarchism entered Vietnamese radicalism. The Vietnamese radical Phan Boi Chau (1867–1940), who was in Tokyo at this same time, engaged in common activities with Chinese and Japanese radicals. The Pan-Asian anti-imperialism of the Chinese anarchists resonated with Phan's own concerns about the liberation of Vietnam from French colonialism. Hue-Tam Ho Tai suggests, however, that Phan, of a conservative temperament, may also have found attractive the "nativistic orientation" of the "Tokyo" Chinese anarchists.[7]

The treason trial and the execution of Kōtoku Shūsui in 1911 "signalled the 'winter period' for anarchism in Japan, which was to continue until the end of the First World War".[8] Anarchist activity did not cease; Ōsugi Sakae (1885–1923), who over the next decade emerged as the foremost figure in Japanese anarchism, continued with publication and organisational activities, but under strict police supervision (Ōsugi himself was in and out of jail continuously), such activity was sporadic and short-lived, and without much consequence in Japan, although Ōsugi exerted considerable influence on anarchists in China and, later, Korea.[9]

In contrast to the situation in Japan, anarchism grew deeper roots among Chinese radicals during the decade among intellectuals on the Chinese mainland, who suffered from police interference similarly to their Japanese counterparts, but also had greater space for action in the turmoil following the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. Anarchist activity was visible in the burgeoning labour movement in South China. Paris anarchists brought their activities home, and were especially influential in educational circles.

And a new generation of anarchists appeared in South China around the figure of an assassin turned anarchist, Liu Sifu (1884–1915), better known by his adopted name of Shifu. The

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[7] Hue-Tam Ho Tai, *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992, 61.

[8] John Crump, *Hatta Shūzō and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, 30.

[9] There was also, throughout this period, a fledgling anarchist labour movement in Japan. For a survey, see Hagiwara Shintaro, *Nihon Anakizumu rōdō undō shi*, Tokyo: Gendai shochosha, 1969.

Cock-Crow Society that Shifu established in 1912 and its journal, *People's Voice*, served in the mid-1910s as the most important organs of anarchism in China. Shifu promoted the social anarchism of Kropotkin, and while not a particularly original thinker, played an important part in his polemics with the socialist Jiang Kanghu (1883–?) in clarifying differences between anarchism ("pure socialism") and other currents in socialism. It was above all his seriousness of purpose that impressed his followers and others, so that by the 1920s his ideas would achieve the status of an "ism", Shifu'ism. Shifu died in 1915 but his followers carried on the activities of the Society he had founded.

By the late 1910s, educational reform activities had gotten underway in Beijing that would culminate in the New Culture Movement of the late teens and early twenties, which was to play a seminal role in the cultural revolution in modern China. "Paris" anarchists and their associates were to play an important part in these reforms; they were joined enthusiastically by the younger anarchists who had received their training under Shifu's tutelage. Anarchist ideas on the family, youth and women, the communal experiments that they promoted, and their concern for labour acquired broad currency in the culture of a new generation, even though not many were aware of their anarchist origins within the Chinese context. Among those to come under anarchist influence was Mao Zedong who, like many later Bolsheviks, expressed enthusiasm at this time for European anarchists and their ideas. Anarchists also played a part in the founding of the first Bolshevik groups in China which would culminate in the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1921, gradually to overshadow the anarchists, and to marginalize them in Chinese radicalism.

The flourishing of anarchism in China in the 1910s also continued to nourish anarchism in Vietnam. Phan Boi Chau, who moved to South China after 1911, received the support not only of his former associates from Tokyo, but of Liu Sifu as well, who helped him financially but also advised him on his organisational activities, one product of which was the League for the Prosperity of China and Asia, which "aimed to foster solidarity between China and the colonized countries of Asia, in particular Vietnam, India, Burma, and Korea".[10]

By the early twenties, however, this situation was reversed, and anarchism entered a decline from which it would not recover. Following the October Revolution in Russia, anarchists found a formidable competitor on the left; Bolshevik communists who commanded better organisational abilities, were more effective therefore in organising the growing labour movements, and, not incidentally, received backing from the new Soviet Union. Anarchists made a comeback in Japan initially in a context of increasing labour activism and political relaxation. Ōsugi Sakae was murdered in 1923 by the police, but anarchist and syndicalist activity continued to grow nevertheless, under the guidance of Hatta Shūzō (1886–1934), a former clergyman turned anarchist, who sought to rid anarchism from its contamination by Marxist elements by formulating a "pure anarchism". Anarchists were riddled with conflicts between syndicalists and the "pure anarchists", but in the end it was the political repression of the thirties that put an end to all radicalism in Japan. In China and Vietnam competition from Bolshevism proved to be debilitating. By 1927, Chinese anarchists, in their anti-Bolshevism, devoted their efforts mainly to fighting Bolshevik ideological and labour activity, some of them in collusion with the most reactionary elements in Chinese politics.

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[10] Tai, 60.

The one exception to this trend was among Korean radicals. In the early twenties, Korean radicals established anarchist societies at v arious locations in China, and in Tokyo. Like their Vietnamese counterparts, Korean anarchists were drawn to anarchism most importantly for its anti-imperialism. Some of them also found appealing the anarchist emphasis on "direct action", which offered a strategy of mass mobilization against the Japanese colonial government. Shin Chaeho (1880–1936), who was active in China, was the most prominent of

Korean anarchists, and author of the 1923 "Declaration of the Korean Revolution". He found in anarchism a justification for mass violence against colonialism. He also believed that anarchism provided an alternative to Bolshevik despotism, and the control of the radical movement by Moscow.

Korean anarchists active in Tokyo also stressed the importance of anarchism in the anti-colonial struggle. The entanglement of anarchism in anti-colonial nationalism may be an important reason for many Korean scholars' insistence that anarchists were little more than nationalists in disguise. There is good evidence also, however, of internationalist commitments of the Korean anarchists, some of whom contributed to the development of anarchism elsewhere. Yu Jamyeong (Liu Ziming in Chinese) and Sim Yonghae (Shen Ronghai in Chinese) were two such Korean anarchists who taught and engaged in publication activities in China, and eventually became Chinese citizens.[11]

Anarchism may have had the most lasting influence in China. While politically irrelevant after the mid-twenties, anarchists continued to be active in the labour movement in South China, where they continued to challenge communist organisation. During the Anti-Japanese Resistance War after 1937, anarchists in Sichuan in Western China agitated for popular mobilization in the conduct of the War. Some Chinese anarchists would also participate in the late 1930s in the Spanish Civil War against the forces of Fascism.[12]

More significant in the long run were cultural and educational activities. In the cultural arena, the most important contributions were those of Li Feigan (known as Bajin, 1904–2005), the novelist who for years was the only Chinese anarchist of stature familiar to anarchist circles abroad. Equally interesting is the career of Li Shizeng, one of the foundational figures of anarchism in China, who in the 1930s turned his attention to the study of migrant societies under the rubric of *qiaologie*, which may best be rendered into something like "diasporology". Interestingly, despite his close association with the nationalistically obsessed *Guomindang* Right, Li saw in migrant societies a key to the cosmopolitanism required by a new world. Whether or not an anarchist sociology survived the communist victory in 1949 is a subject deserving of investigation.

"Paris" anarchists used their influence within the *Goumindang*, of which they constituted the right-wing in their anti-Communism, to establish a Labour University in Shanghai in 1927, which for a period of five years sought to put in practise the anarchist belief in the necessity of com-

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[11] I am grateful to Dongyoun Hwang for sharing this information with me. Hwang will elaborate further on these connections in a forthcoming article on anarchism in Korea. According to Hwang, Yu, associated with a terror-oriented group of Korean anarchists, was close to Bajin, and taught for a while in the 1920s in the Lida College in Shanghai, which offered a home to anarchists. Sim, who was also close to Bajin, worked for a while for the *Guofeng ribao* ("National Customs Daily") in Shanghai. He had a brother, Sim Geukchu (Shen Keqiu in Chinese) who also participated in these activities. The two also worked closely with Japanese anarchists, surnamed Sano and Matsumoto, who were also active in Shanghai during these years. Personal communication.

[12] Nancy Tsou and Len Tsou, *Ganlan guiguande zhaohuan: Canjia Xibanya neizhande Zhongguo ren (1936–1939)* ("The Call of the Olive Laurel: Chinese in the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939"—the English title on the cover is given as "The Call of Spain"), Taipei: Renjian Publishers, 2001.

bining mental and manual labour in education. This belief, and the Kropotkinite insistence on combining agriculture and industry in social development, had become part of radical culture during the New Culture Movement. Both would reappear after 1949 during efforts to rejuvenate the promises of the revolutionary movement, most importantly in the twenty year period from 1956 to 1976 that is dismissed these days as a period of deviations from socialism due to the misdeeds of the Cultural Revolution. These anarchist contributions to Chinese radicalism would outlast the anarchist movement, and appear after 1949 as important elements in the conflicts over Bolshevik bureaucratism within the Communist Party itself.

Chinese anarchists and the question of culture

Political and ideological differences among the Chinese anarchists were visible in the different readings they placed on anarchism and, by implication, on the question of its relationship to Chinese cultural legacies, which were themselves in the process of radical re-evaluation in the early part of the 20th century. The "Paris" anarchists were involved in the anti-monarchical activities of the emergent *Guomindang*, and displayed little tolerance for native philosophical legacies. Resolutely modernist, they fetishized science, and called for a cultural revolution (they were the first among Chinese revolutionaries to call for a "Confucius Revolution"). The strategy of revolution they favoured was "universal education" to remake the Chinese population. This was also the strategy they favoured in later years as powerful members of the *Guomindang*.

The "Tokyo" anarchists, by contrast, promoted an anti-modernist anarchism. Liu Shipei had made his fame as a classical scholar before he became an anarchist, and was a leading light of the "national essence" group that advocated a reformulation of received culture in the reconstruction of China as a nation. Seemingly conservative, the search for "national essence" was actually quite subversive in its implications as it sought to formulate out of past legacies a national essence that could be used to challenge the contemporary status quo. Liu himself did not hesitate to find analogies between the Chinese and European pasts, as in his comparisons between the cultural efflorescence of the late Zhou Dynasty (roughly 6th–3rd centuries BCE) and the European Renaissance.[13]

Liu's approach to anarchism similarly sought to establish analogies between modern anarchism and currents in native thought. Indeed, he believed that premodern Chinese thought came closer to upholding anarchist social ideals than its counterparts elsewhere. In a speech to the inaugural meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism Liu stated that though the imperial political system had been despotic in appearance, the power of the government had been remote from the lives of the people, who thus had considerable freedom from politics. Furthermore, advocacy of *laissez-faire* government by Confucianism and Daoism had helped minimize government intervention in society. As a result, he concluded, China was more likely than other societies to achieve anarchism; he implied, in fact, that if only Chinese could be purged of their habits of obedience (but he did not say where those came from!), anarchism could be achieved in China in the very near future.[14] The fifth issue of *Natural Justice* carried a picture of Laozi as the father of

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[13] For a discussion, see, Hon Tze-ki, "Revolution as Restoration: The Meanings of 'National Essence' and 'National Learning' in the *Guocui xuebao* ("National Essence Journal"), 1905–1911), paper presented at "The Writing of History in 20th Century East Asia: Between Linear Time and the Reproduction of National Consciousness", Leiden, 4–7 June 2007. I am grateful to Prof. Hon for sharing this paper with me.

[14] See the report, "Shehui zhuyi jiangxihui diyici kaihui jishi" ("Record of the Inaugural Meeting of the Society

anarchism in China. In formulating his utopian scheme, Liu acknowledged his debt to Xu Xing, an agrarian utopianist of the 3rd century B.C.E., who had advocated a rural life as the ideal life, and promoted the virtues of manual labour by all without distinction, including the Emperor. Liu noted that whereas he himself advocated cooperation, Xu had promoted self-sufficiency, but otherwise he saw no significant difference between Xu's ideas and his own.[15]

Among Western anarchists, Liu found in Tolstoy confirmation of the ideals that he "discovered" in native sources.[16] Like Tolstoy, he idealized rural life and manual labour, and opposed a commercialized economy. He believed that Chinese society had begun to degenerate with the emergence of a money economy during the late Zhou. The money economy had led to the strengthening of despotism. The commercial economy had led to the impoverishment of many, prompting government efforts to establish controls over land.

Liu almost certainly had Sun Yat-sen's "equalization of land rights" in mind when he described this development as one that enhanced despotic government. His suspicion of the commercial economy also underlay his hostility to recent changes in Chinese society. He emphasized the destruction of the rural economy under pressure from Western commerce, and the ensuing crisis this had created for the peasantry. He also expressed a strong dislike for the kind of urbanization represented by Shanghai's colonial modernity as a moral sink where men degenerated into thieves and women into prostitutes.[17] The kind of development he favoured was one that sought to overcome such degeneration. He was to find it in Kropotkin's suggestion of combining agriculture and industry, and thus preventing the alienation of rural from urban life as in modern society.

Anarchism was also entangled in its reception in the late Qing in a revival of interest in Buddhism. Not only were there Buddhist monks among Chinese anarchists, but the Guangdong anarchists led by Shifu displayed more than a casual interest in Buddhism. Efforts to find some kind of equivalence between anarchism and native Chinese philosophies gradually declined among a newer generation that was nourished on the anti-traditionalism of the New Culture Movement of the 1920s.

It is tempting, in light of these early efforts, to conclude that there was indeed some resonance between native philosophical legacies and anarchism that facilitated Qing intellectuals' attraction to anarchism. This obviously was not the case for all anarchists, some of whom were attracted to anarchism for exactly the opposite reason: its promise of revolutionary cultural and social transformation. Care needs to be exercised even in the case of those who sought to find some affinity between received philosophies and anarchism. Translation of anarchist ideas into native concepts and practices may have helped familiarize those ideas, but it also required re-reading native texts, and endowing them with a new meaning. The re-reading of the past was intended not to show the way to the restoration of imagined practices of the past but to social transformation towards a future of which the past would be one element among others, no less the modern for its help in bringing modernity under control.

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for the Study of Socialism"), *Xin Shiji* ("New Era"), Nos. 22, 25, 26. This in no. 22 (16 November 1907): 4.

[15] Shenshu (Liu Shipei), "Renlei junli shuo" ("On the Equal Ability of Human Beings"), *Tianyi bao* ("Natural Justice"), No.3 (10 July 1907): 24–36.

[16] Shenshu, "Dushu zaji" ("Random Notes on Books Read"), *Tianyi bao*, nos 11–12 (30 November 1907): 416–417.

[17] It is noteworthy that Liu was also among the first critics of imperialism, and an advocate of Asia for Asians.

Anarchism and places

Anarchism was the beneficiary of a strong utopian strain in Chinese thinking in the early 20ᵗʰ century that accompanied, and provided a counterpoint to, nationalist anxieties about the possibilities of survival in a world dominated by Euro/American imperialism. But it is not to be dismissed, therefore, as merely utopian. "Paris" anarchists' advocacy of universal education as the means to cultural and social revolution would have long term consequences in radical politics in the 1920s and 1930s. "Tokyo" anarchists proved to be forerunners of feminism, as well as of strategies of development that would reappear with greater force in later years in Maoist efforts to devise a revolutionary alternative to capitalist or Soviet socialist development. Guangdong anarchists would be particularly prominent in the labour movement, especially in Southern China.

Nevertheless, anarchism in general suffered from an abstractness that limited anarchist efforts to convert their social revolutionary ideals into lasting practise. This was very much the case with the "Paris" anarchists with their commitment to a scientistic universalism that blinded them to peculiarities of time and space even when they undertook projects of the utmost practicality, such as the work-study projects they sponsored in France, or the Labour University in Shanghai. But it was also the case with the anarchism of a Liu Shipei who, in his resistance to the promises of modernity from technology to urbanization to capitalism in general, was more inclined to explore the relationship between anarchism and native cultural legacies that might have facilitated the domestication of anarchism, and secured greater popular receptivity to its premises. In discovering anarchism in native legacies, however, Liu ignored their differences from anarchism. The failure to recognize difference rendered articulation meaningless: rather than articulate anarchism to local values to produce a genuinely localized version of anarchism, Liu simply appropriated native legacies for anarchism. The appropriation gave its peculiar colouring to his anarchism. But, rather than bring anarchism closer to the ground, it ended up distancing native legacies from the ground in which they had flourished.

The problem here is similar to the problem that the communists faced a few decades later when they sought to "sinicize" Marxism in order to create a vernacular socialism that could be phrased in the language of everyday life—which was to go a long ways in securing communist victory in 1949. Still, as the subsequent history of the People's Republic reveals, any such effort threatens claims to universality, and presents the predicament of dissipation into the local beyond recognition. This, however, need not be the case. The rendering of socialism into the language of place also changes that language, bringing into it an idiom that connects it to other places that have come into the orbit of socialism. So long as there is a reference beyond the local, that refers the local to a broader undertaking of which it is part, difference may be difference within unity rather than against it.

The predicament that Chinese anarchists (and later Marxists) faced in the early 20ᵗʰ century may have something to say presently to the stateless social movements that represent the best hope out of the iron cage of global capitalism. The so-called new social movements need to be grounded in place so as to address problems of everyday life, but they also need to be part of something larger if they are to survive oppression and achieve their goals. Radicals committed to social change, be they anarchists, Marxists, or social democrats of one stripe or another, if they are to overcome the one-sidedness that has h ampered social activity in the past, need to respond to the contradictory demands of the local and the translocal in which these social movements

are embedded. That means not just bringing theory or ideology to the local, but also rephrasing them in the language of places-without forgetting what the theory and the ideology have to say beyond the local. Not an easy task, but none the less essential for that.

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The Makhnovist Movement and the National Question in the Ukraine, 1917–1921

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Social and ethnic foundations

The Makhnovist movement of 1917–1921 represents the clearest and most powerful manifestation of anarchism in Ukraine.[1] However, it is essential to bear in mind that this movement reflected the particular features of only one part of the very heterogeneous Ukraine, which to this day is still distinctly divided into the West (Galicia), the Central part of the country (the northern part of the Right Bank of the Dnepr), the South (including the Crimea), the Left Bank, and the Donbass.

The territory in which the Makhnovists held sway primarily encompassed Priazove (the region close to the Sea of Azov), the southern part of the Left Bank, and the eastern Donbass. The Makhnovists also operated on the Right Bank, mainly in Ekaterinoslav, as well as in the Poltava region and the Chernigov region. The Makhnovist movement—the *Makhnovischna* or "Makhno movement"—was named after the anarchist Nestor Ivanovich Makhno "1888–1934." It had its roots in a quarter of the small town of Gulyai-Pole in the Aleksandrov District.

The history of this area is associated with Cossack outlaws, agricultural struggle and nomadic culture. However, by the beginning of the 20th century only the memory of the Zaporozhe Cossacks remained. New people with a new way of life had settled in the local steppe.

Marxist historiography maintained that this was a *kulak* area (that is, dominated by prosperous landed peasants who employed labour), and that *kulak* farms accounted for 22 percent of all agriculture in the region.[2] But this figure can be arrived at only by counting as *kulaks* peasants

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[1] This paper, commissioned for this volume, was translated from the Russian by Sally Laird, with the support of the International Institute for Social History and the University of the Witwatersrand. It is drawn primarily from Russian language sources. The reader seeking secondary literature in English and in German may wish to consult A.E. Adams, *Bolsheviks in the Ukraine: the Second Campaign, 1918–1919*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963; Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967; Dittmar Dahlmann, *Land und Freiheit: Machnovščina und Zapatismo als Beispiele agrarrevolutionärer Bewegungen*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1986; Michael Malet, *Nestor Makhno in the Russian Civil War*, London: Macmillan, 1982; Michael Palij, *The Anarchism of Nestor Makhno, 1918–1921: an aspect of the Ukrainian Revolution*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976; Victor Peters, *Nestor Makhno: the life of an anarchist*, Winnipeg: Echo Books, 1970; and Alexandre Skirda, *Nestor Makhno: anarchy's Cossack: the struggle for free soviets in the Ukraine 1917–1921*, Edinburgh, San Francisco: AK Press, (1982) 2003. Also of interest is J. Himka, "Young Radicals and Independent Statehood: the idea of a Ukrainian nation-state, 1890–1895", *Slavic Review*, 4: 2, 1982, 219–235.

[2] Iu. Iu. Kondufor (ed.) *Istoriya Ukrainskoi SSR*, vol. 6, Kiev, Nauk: Dumka, 1983, 16.

who had at their disposal more than 10.9 hectares of land,[3] a view that even in the Marxist historiography is regarded as "extreme".[4] Large estates and peasant farming still constituted the basis of agriculture in the area. *Kulakism* was concentrated primarily in the German farms—an alien phenomenon within the local peasant milieu. The attempt during the Stolypin reforms to destroy the peasant commune, or *obshchina*, met with great resistance in the Ekaterinoslav province.[5]

The territory in which the Makhno movement was to develop was one of the most market-oriented in the whole of the Russian empire. By the early 20th century, the Ukraine was the empire's richest farming region in the empire: it accounted for 40 percent of cultivated land, and, by 1914, produced around 20 percent of the world's wheat and nearly 90 percent of the empire's wheat exports.[6] The proximity of the ports and the well-developed rail network stimulated the development of the grain market.

In 1913, for example, the Ekaterinaoslav province produced approximately 1,789 metric tons of wheat.[7] Of these, 860 metric tons were exported outside the province.[8] This is to leave out of account the intra-provincial market, which was also quite extensive, as the province had numerous industrial centres that required bread. The peasants remained the most active force within the Ekaterinoslav bread market: between 1862 and 1914 the peasants of the steppe region succeeded in buying up almost half the landlords' (*pomeshchiki*) land. But the landowners relentlessly raised the price of land.[9] Relying on the support of government, they sought to retain a leasing relationship with the peasants. Naturally this aroused hostility from the peasants towards all forms of large-scale private ownership, whether on the part of the landed gentry or the *kulaks*. At the same time the communalyet-market form of peasant agriculture facilitated the development of various forms of agricultural cooperatives, which the *zemstvos* (local governments with class-based representation) actively supported.[10]

The market orientation of *obshchina* agriculture also contributed to the development, in what became the Makhnovist territory, of agricultural machine production and other agriculture-related industry. 24.4 percent of the country's agricultural machinery was produced in the Ekaterinoslav and Tavrischeskaya provinces, compared with only 10 percent in Moscow.[11] A significant proportion of industry in the Ekaterinoslav province was dispersed around the province, and small towns and large villages became genuine agro-industrial complexes. In the future capital of the Makhnovists, Gulyai-Pole, there was an iron foundry and two steam mills, and in the Gulyai-Pole rural district (*volost*), there were 12 tile and brick works.[12]

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[3] Or 10 *desyatins* in terms of the pre-1924 imperial measurements. See M. Kubanin, *Makhnovshchina*, Leningrad: n.p., 1927, 19.

[4] Yu. K. Strizhakov, *Prodotryady v gody grazhdanskoi voiny i inostrannoi interventsii 1917–1921 gg.*, Moscow, 1973, 225.

[5] See, for example, S. Kobytov, V.A. Kozlov and B.G. Litvak, *Russkoe krest'yanstvo. Etapy dukhovnogo osvobozhdeniya*, Moscow, 1988, 74.

[6] Colin M. Darch, "The Makhnovischna, 1917–1921: ideology, nationalism, and peasant insurgency in early twentieth century Ukraine", Ph.D. diss., University of Bradford, 1994, 136, 138–139.

[7] 109,806 *pudi* in terms of the pre-1924 imperial measurements.

[8] 52,757 *pudi*: *Vsya Ekaterinoslavskaya guberniya*, Ekaterinoslav: n.p., 1913, 3.

[9] M. Kubanin, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 18–19.

[10] *Vsya Ekaterinoslavskaya guberniya*, 9–10.

[11] Kubanin, *Ukaz. soch.*, 11.

[12] *Vsya Ekaterinoslavskaya guberniya*, 42.

This led not only to a highly commercialized economy, but also to close relations between the peasantry and the working class, which was dispersed among various rural locations. Many peasants also moved away to become wage-earners in the neighbouring large industrial centres. At the same time, they were able to return to the village in the event of an industrial crisis. The village itself, in such cases, was to a great extent protected from industrial shortages, since much industrial production occurred on the spot, locally. Under these circumstances the big cities seemed to the peasants alien, and not especially relevant.

The prevailing social order in Priazove did not favour the development of nationalism, which had its roots in the economically more isolated peasantry of the northern Ukraine, and became a force in the Civil War. In terms of ethnic composition, in 1917–1925 Ukrainians constituted 80–83 percent of the overall population of the Ukraine. At the same time, the non-Ukrainian population predominated in the big cities and in the Donbass. The population of the Makhnovist territory was notably mixed. Here Ukrainians ("Little Russians") and Russians ("Great Russians") lived side by side, and their villages were interspersed with German, Jewish and Greek settlements. The *lingua franca* of the region was Russian, and a significant proportion of Ukrainians (including Makhno) did not actually speak Ukrainian. Nor did the Left Bank benefit from the circulation of money lent by Jewish moneylenders, since the Jewish population in the settlements was primarily engaged in trade and agriculture. For this reason anti-Semitism, too, was less rife in these parts than in the Right Bank.

The beginnings and rise of the anarchist movement

The anarchist movement in Ukraine, as in Russia as a whole, originated in the "Populist" or *narodnik* movement of the 1870s and 1880s. However, in the 1880s most of the *narodnik* groups moved away from anarchism, or were crushed by the tsarist regime. The revival of the anarchist movement in the Russian empire began in 1903. It was then, too, that the first group arose in Nezhin in the Chernigov province. In 1904 the anarcho-communists held their all-Russian conference in Odessa.

During the revolution of 1905–1907 there was a powerful surge in socio-political activity, including the anarchist movement. Its main centres in the Ukraine were Odessa and Ekaterinoslav, but groups were also active in Kiev, Zhitomir and Kamenets-Podolskoe. The anarchists numbered several thousand, the majority being young Jews. Anarchist groups, particularly the anarcho-communists, carried out agitational work and resorted to terrorist acts. In Odessa, Ekaterinoslav and Kiev, the anarchists participated alongside other left-wing groups in the creation of armed detachments. The syndicalist current also began to develop with Yakov Novomirsky's establishment of the South Russian group of anarcho-syndicalists in 1906. After the revolution was defeated, there was a sharp drop in both the number of organisations, and in their membership.

The revolution of 1905–1907 also affected Gulyai-Pole. On the 22 February 1905, the Kerner factory went on strike.[13] The workers demanded improved working conditions, and the abolition of penalties and overtime. Among the strikers was the young Nestor Makhno. In September 1906 the terrorist Peasant Group of Anarcho-communists (also known as the "Union of Free Grain Growers") began to operate in Gulyai-Pole. The group was led by Voldemar Antoni, who was

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[13] All dates up to 14 February 1918 are given according to the Julian calendar used at that time in Russia.

associated with the Ekaterinoslav anarchists, and the Semenyut brothers, Aleksandr and Prokopii. There were several different nationalities among the group's members.

Makhno located the terrorists faster than the police, forced them to accept him into their ranks, and by the 14 October was already participating in a robbery. At the end of 1906 he was arrested for possessing weapons, but then released as a minor. In the course of the year the group carried out four bloodless robberies. Young people in black masks (or with faces smeared in mud) demanded money "for the starving" or simply money as such, introducing themselves as anarchists and disappearing afterwards. Their gains amounted to around 1,000 roubles.[14] On the 27 August 1907, Makhno was involved in an exchange of fire with the police. A short while later he was identified and arrested. But his friends did not abandon him. Under pressure from the terrorist group, the peasant who had identified Makhno withdrew his testimony.

However, by 1907 the Gulyai-Pole "Robin Hood" gang was operating under police surveillance. The valiant custodians of law and order were in no hurry to arrest young people with weapons, allowing them instead to become more deeply involved with crime in order to create a stronger case against them, according to a Soviet researcher, G. Novopolin, who studied the documents from the trial.[15]

The role of Sherlock Holmes in unmasking the Gulyai-Pole group fell to the resident constable in Gulyai-Pole, Karachentsev. In order to discover who was involved, the village detective put to use the usual Russian weapon—provocation. Karachentsev's agents infiltrated the group, took part in its attacks, and informed him of the group's activities. The police exposed 14 members of the group of terrorists. The terrorists identified one of the police agents—Kushnir—and killed him. But Karachentsev was already on the trail of the disintegrating group. Following the murder on the 28 July 1908, the core of the group was surrounded in Gulyai-Pole, but the anarchists fought their way out and escaped.

After this, the group finally disintegrated and split up; Antoni went abroad. On the 26 August, Makhno landed up once again in prison. On the 31 December 1908, he tried to escape, but was apprehended. On the 5 January 1910 Prokopii Semenyut attempted to liberate his friends as they were being transported to Ekaterinoslav, but did not succeed (he was prevented by an *agent provocateur* called Altgauzen). The group's last act was the murder of constable Karachentsev on 22 November 1909.

On 22 March Makhno, together with his comrades, was sentenced to death by hanging "for membership of a malicious gang, created for the purpose of committing robbery, for two attacks on a dwelling house and an attempted attack of the same nature".[16] At this point Makhno had not participated in any murder, and according to peacetime laws should have been sentenced to hard labour. But a national "anti-terrorist operation" was under way, and human life was cheap.

Makhno waited for the sentence to be carried out. He was young and full of energy, and expected to be hanged. He did not know that the bureaucracy was meanwhile still debating his fate. The decisive factor was that his parents had at some point falsified his date of birth—he was still considered a minor. This allowed the authorities also to take into account the fact that his actual crimes had not involved murder. As a result the death penalty in Makhno's case was commuted to hard labour in perpetuity.

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[14] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Vospominanija*, Moscow: n.p., 1991, 132–133.

[15] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 134.

[16] Quoted in V.N. Volkovinskii, *Makhno i ego krakh*, Moscow: Vsesoiuznyi zaochnyi politekhnicheskii institut Moskva, 1991, 24.

The rise of the Makhnovischna

The February revolution of 1917, which represented the start of the Great Russian Revolution, led to a fresh upsurge in the anarchist movement in the Ukraine. The movement re-established its 1905 position, but against the background of the dramatic political struggle the influence of the anarchists outside the limits of the Makhnovist territory was not great. The Central *Rada* ("council")—an assembly of the main political groupings—became the most influential force in the Ukraine. The leading parties within it were the Ukrainian social democrats and the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs), who stood for the autonomy of Ukraine within the framework of a larger Russian realm.

In March 1917, the former terrorist Makhno returned from penal servitude to his native Gulyai-Pole. Having won his laurels as a martyr and fighter against the regime, Makhno became a figure of authority, a local notable. March 1917 was a period of euphoria. The revolutionaries who had returned from prison, exile or emigration became unbelievably popular. But few succeeded in turning this initial enthusiasm into lasting mass support. To achieve this it was necessary to establish a solid organisation. Makhno set about doing this.

Makhno gathered his old acquaintances and revived the group of anarcho-communists. Like all other anarchists at the time, the group was influenced by the ideas of Piotr Kropotkin, albeit in an extremely abstract and simplified form. Until August 1917 Makhno also cooperated with the district authorities in preparing the elections to the *zemstvos*, and even in imposing the taxes that were such anathema to the anarchists.[17]

On the 28–29 March, Makhno was elected to the executive committee of the Peasant Union in the local *volost*, and became its head. There were no other revolutionaries with his authority in the small town. The Peasant Union paralysed the Social Committee—which supported the Provisional Government—seized its sections and, in effect, turned itself into the highest organ of power in the region: the Gulyai-Pole *soviet* or council (formally known as the Peasant Union until August 1917). Delegates were sent to the *soviet* from relatively compact groups of the population, which made it easier to relate to voters.[18] But it was the executive committee that took care of day-to-day affairs, dealing with everything ranging from major political questions, to the recovery of a lost cow.[19]

The anarcho-communists' system of power rested on a network of mass organisations that supported Makhno's policies: unions, factory committees, farm labourers' committees, and popular gatherings (*skhody-sobraniya*). The latter represented a kind of permanent referendum that allowed the anarchist leaders to check on the mood of the population. They also played the role of civil courts, resolving disputes among citizens.[20] Makhno loved speaking at these gatherings. He was a brilliant speaker, mixing vernacular speech with scientific terms that he had picked up in prison. The inhabitants of Gulyai-Pole, who were not spoilt by visits from other orators, listened with pleasure to his Russian speech (in a southern dialect close to Ukrainian).

Following talks between the Central Rada and the Russian Provisional Government, the borders of the autonomous Ukraine had been defined and confirmed in the "Provisional Instruction

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[17] V. Danilov and T. Shanin (eds.), *Nestor Makhno, Krest'yanskoe dvizhenie na Ukraine. 1918–1921, Dokumenty i materialy*, Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006, 38–39.

[18] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Rossiiskaya revolyutsiya na Ukraine*, Paris: n.p., 1929, 12–57.

[19] Danilov and Shanin, *Nestor Makhno*, 38.

[20] Makhno, *Kres'yanskoe dvizhenie*, 37.

to the General Secretariat of the Central Rada", issued by the Provisional Government on 17 August 1917. In this Instruction the territory of Ukraine was limited to the Kiev, Volyn, Poltava, Podolsk and Chernigov provinces.

Until November 1917 the Ekaterinoslav province, to which GulyaiPole belonged, was not considered part of the new Ukraine. Makhno rejected the right of the Provisional Government to define the borders of Ukraine, not because he was eager to come under the control of the Central Rada at Kiev, but because as an anarchist, he rejected state power and state borders as such.

The main task that the peasantry set was not national, but social, specifically, the redistribution of land. Following their accession to power, the Makhnovists seized the land registry documents and undertook an inventory of estates—this was in striking contrast to earlier peasant movements, which burned the land registries. The peasants wanted to organise the distribution of land owned by the gentry and *kulaks*. Makhno put this demand to the first congress of district *soviets* which took place in Gulyai-Pole. The anarchist movement's agrarian programme proposed to liquidate the landowners' and *kulaks'* ownership "of land and the luxury estates which they are unable to attend to by their own labour".[21] The landowners and *kulaks* would maintain the right to cultivate land, but only by their own efforts. A further proposal to unite peasants into communes was not successful.

Already by June that year, the peasants had ceased to pay rent, thereby violating the orders of government officials. But they did not succeed in bringing about immediate agrarian reform. First they were delayed by a sharp conflict with B.K. Mikhno, the regional (*uezdny*) commissar of the Provisional Government, and then they were held up by the harvest. In order not to disrupt the production process, the peasants postponed the main reforms until the spring: "on this occasion they confined themselves to not paying rent to the landowners, putting the land under the management of land committees, and appointing guards, in the form of farm managers, to keep watch until the spring over both livestock and equipment so that the landowners would not be able to sell them off".[22]

This reform by itself soon yielded results: the peasants no longer worked on the former landowners' fields out of fear, but out of conscience, and brought in the biggest harvest in the province.[23] And Makhno went further. On 25 September the congress of *soviets* and peasant organisations in Gulyai-Pole announced the confiscation of gentry-owned land, and its transfer to common ownership. Thus Makhno resolved "the land question" before the decrees of the AllRussian Congress of Soviets or the laws of the Constituent Assembly. The leader of the SRs, Viktor Chernov, had made virtually the same proposals. But he was unable to convince the Provisional Government to agree to his approach, whereas the Makhno *soviet* succeeded in implementing it.

After the Kornilov revolt, which deprived the Provisional Government of authority in the district as the central authorities were unable to prevent counter-revolutionary actions, the Makhnovists created their own Committee to Defend the Revolution under the auspices of the *soviet* and confiscated "kulak" weapons for use by their own detachment. Makhno, of course, headed the committee. The new organ was supposed to be in charge of defending the district from any out-

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[21] Makhno, *Kres'yanskoe dvizhenie*, 70–71.

[22] Makhno, *Kres'yanskoe dvizhenie*, 77.

[23] *Narodne zhittya*, 17 Sepetember 1917.

side interference. The Committee called a congress of *soviets* of the GulyaiPole district, which supported Makhno's actions. Thus, Gulyai-Pole became the capital of the surrounding villages.

The formation of the nationalist Ukrainian state

The creation of an independent centre of power in the Gulyai-Pole district was treated with hostility by the official district administration. The Gulyai-Pole district had long been a source of irritation to commissar Mikhno. The anarcho-communists had liquidated the Social Committee, and in effect removed the district from the jurisdiction of the regional authorities. Mikhno threatened to organise a punitive expedition to the district. But the *Makhnovischna* were armed and ready to repulse any attack. At the same time they decided to attack the enemy from the rear: an agitation team was sent to the regional centre of Aleksandrovsk to campaign against Mikhno. The workers supported the people of Gulyai-Pole by going on strike, thereby paralysing the work of that regional commissar, who was forced to leave the anarchist district alone.

In September, Makhno encountered competition in the struggle for the "revolutionary masses" from a personage even more radical than himself. The well-known anarchist Mariya Girgorevna "Marusya" Nikiforovna arrived in Gulyai-Pole. By this time the 32-year-old Marusya (as she was called by her associates) was even more famous than Makhno himself. She had taken part in the stormy events in Petrograd, and then returned to her native region:[24]

> In Aleksandrovsk and neighbouring Ekaterinoslav she began to set up anarchist workers' military detachments of the [anarchist] Black Guard. Soon she would succeed in organising such detachments in Odessa, Nikolaev, Kherson, Kamensk, Melitopol, Yuzovsk, Nikopol, Gorlovka …

If even half this information is true, Marusya represented a highly influential figure. Her Black Guards carried out raids on factory owners and military units, replenishing their ammunition, and then financing workers' organisations. Thus Marusya's popularity grew.

Makhno, who was used to negotiating with the bourgeoisie (on his own terms, of course), but not (any more) to organising raids, did not approve of Nikiforova's methods, which were aimed at provoking a confrontation with the Alekandrov authorities. Marusya even incited some of the Makhnovists to attack a military unit in Orekhov. The operation was successful: the attackers destroyed a subdivision of the Preobrazhenskii regiment, killing their officers and seizing their arms. Makhno was outraged by Marusya's irresponsibility. At this point he was trying to avoid armed confrontation, and to confine himself to threats.

Marusya was meanwhile forced to leave Gulyai-Pole and move on to Aleksandrovsk, where she was soon arrested by the supporters of Provisional Government.[25] The Makhnovists, and the Aleksandrov workers, were obliged to rescue the extremist, threatening raids and a strike. When a crowd of workers arrived at the prison gates, Marusya was released. The members of the Aleksandrov *soviet* were re-elected to the benefit of the Left, the government commissar was frightened, and the Aleksandrov officials ceased to threaten Gulyai-Pole.

In short, Makhno had established *soviet* power in his territory earlier than Lenin, and was ahead of him in building a new society. Makhno's initiatives also exceeded those of the October

[24] V. Savchenko, *Avantyuristy grazhdanskoi voiny*, Kharkov/Moscow: Izd-vo Folio/ AST, 2000, 71.
[25] V. Belash V., "Makhnovshchina", in *Letopis' revolyutsii*, No.3, 1928, 194–195.

Revolution: workers' control, self-management in the collectives and workers' organisations, co-operation, and attempts to regulate the exchange of products outside of the collapsing market. The *soviet* system was viewed by the Makhnovists not as a hierarchical governing force, a state, but as the guarantor of the full rights of workers' and peasants' organisations.

On the 26 October 1917, in the course of the upheavals in Petrograd, "all power to the *soviets*" was declared. For this reason the Makhnovists took a favourable view of the October Revolution, and even proposed votes for the Bolsheviks and SRs in the elections to the Constituent Assembly.[26] However, unlike the Bolsheviks, Makhno spoke out against economic and political centralism and against privileges for workers and civil servants.

In Kiev there were clashes between the Bolsheviks and supporters of the Provisional Government; as a result on the 1 November, power in Kiev was transferred to the Central Rada. In its third "Universal" (or official proclamation) on the 7 November, the Rada confirmed that it was aiming to secure the autonomy of Ukraine as part of a federal Russia.[27] The Universal also declared that the Kiev, Chernigov, Volyn, Podolsk, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, and Kherson provinces and the Materikovaya part of the Tavrichesakaya province (not including the Crimea), would be part of Ukraine. Thus, the Rada's territorial claims were greater than before.

Makhno became engrossed in this new political reality. He had struggled bitterly for the power of the *soviets* in these areas even before the October Revolution, and felt that now there was no time to lose. At issue was the question of which sphere of influence the Left Bank of the Dnepr would come under: *soviet* power, the Rada's Ukrainian government, or the "White" counter-revolutionaries.

Makhno took part in reconciling the Ekaterinoslav *soviet* and the mutinous Georgiev cavaliers who protested against *soviet* power, and sought by every means possible to prevent the Central Rada from extending its influence. In Gulyai-Pole there was a well-organised group of supporters of the new Ukrainian state, who held their meetings in the town.[28] Makhno gathered the peasants of the region at a Regional Congress of Soviets, which passed a resolution declaring "Death to the Central Rada".[29] The Ukrainian nationalists were silenced for a time.

At the same time, the district came under threat from an even more dangerous quarter: several echelons of Cossacks had returned from the Front. If they got through to the Don at this point, the forces of General Alexey Maximovich Kaledin, head of the Don Cossack Whites, would have been given a significant military boost.

Taking a short-term perspective, Makhno could have simply let the Cossacks through to the Don. But he needed to take a longer-term view, and his Congress of Soviets called for a detachment to be formed to fight the Cossacks. This was a "free battalion" led by the Makhno brothers, with Savva as the commander, and Nestor as the political organiser. This was the first time Nestor Makhno was to put himself forward as a military leader. His future reputation for military leadership had not yet been established when the Makhnovist forces seized the approaches to the Kichkasskii bridge across the Dnepr. In a brief battle on 8 January 1918, the Makhnovists, in alliance with the Bolsheviks and the Left SRs, halted and disarmed the Cossacks.45 The Cossacks themselves were not, in any case, eager for battle. What they wanted most was to get home, and

[26] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 77.

[27] The Rada issued four Universals from 1917–1918, regarded as the founding documents of the nationalist Ukrainian People's Republic.

[28] V.N. Volkovinskii, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 34.

[29] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 110.

it did not matter all that much whether they did so with arms, or without. The outcome of this battle complicated Kaledin's position.

Already on December 4, Soviet Russia declared that it was prepared to recognise the Ukraine's independence, but not the authority of the Central Rada, since the latter did not have the authority to represent the Ukrainian people. Who, then, did have that authority? At the elections to the Constituent Assembly the parties of the Central Rada, the majority of whom were socialists, won a significant majority of the votes. But that left out a quarter of the voters—those living in the big cities and on the Left Bank of the Dnepr. The Central Rada laid claim to a broad swathe of territory extending all the way to the Donbass and Kursk, where its power had never been recognised. By laying claim to the eastern territories, the Central Rada had also claimed the population of the Left Bank, which was even more indifferent to the nationalist idea than the inhabitants of the Right Bank.

On 3–5 December the Bolsheviks and the Left SRs suffered a defeat at the 1st Congress of Ukrainian Soviets, and withdrew from it. Blaming the Central Rada for not having admitted some of the delegates from the Eastern Ukraine to the Congress, they gathered in Kharkov and declared a Ukrainian Soviet Republic. On 8 November, detachments from Russia and the Donbass (which was both Russian and Ukrainian, but in January had created its own Donetsk-Krivorosh Soviet Republic) came to their aid. Now, having got "their" own Ukraine, the Bolsheviks also had to recognise that "their" eastern districts, with a mixed population, belonged to the Ukraine. Having collided with the Soviets over their extended sphere of influence, the Central Rada on 9 January 1918, declared the independent Ukrainian People's Republic.

Nowadays, the war that ensued between the Ukrainian nationalists and the Bolsheviks is referred to by the former as "Russia's aggression". But inhabitants of Ukraine also marched in the Red columns; it was they who rose up for the power of the *soviets*. Many were not interested in a national state as such, but in its social c ontent—in what it would give to the peasant and worker. Although in its Universal the Central Rada had declared the right of the peasants to the land, like the Provisional Government, it delayed in actually instituting agrarian reform.

For Makhno—as for the majority of the inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine, including Kiev and Odessa, where the majority spoke Russian—the nationalist Ukrainian government was not theirs. For them the war against the Central Rada, and the other authorities established by the Ukrainian nationalists, was a war against an attempt to tear apart the living fabric of the people by those who were dragging their feet in carrying out socialist transformation. The Central Rada put forward romantic nationalist promises, yet the advance of Soviet troops did not arouse any significant popular opposition. On 8 February 1918 Mikhail Muravev's Soviet troops took Kiev, and the Central Rada fled to Zhitomir.

Brest-Litovsk, German occupation and anarchist resistance

But at this point the fate of the Ukraine was being decided not in Kiev, but in Brest. Here, on the 9 December 1917, peace talks began between Russia and the Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. On the 18 December 1917, a Central Rada delegation arrived. On the 30th December, the Bolshevik representative Leon Trotsky recognised its authority to participate, in the hope of preventing it from openly transferring its allegiance to

the Germans. Nevertheless, in the conditions of heightened conflict, the Central Rada representatives decided to come to a separate agreement with the Central Powers.

This would define the fate of the Ukraine—including those territories that were totally against the Central Rada. Makhno did not suspect that the fate of his district was now being decided in far-off Brest. On the 9 February 1918, Rada representatives concluded a peace agreement under which the Ukraine undertook to supply Germany with provisions that would alleviate the social crisis in that country, and invited German troops to the Ukraine to oust the supporters of Soviet power. The Ukrainian nationalists had acquired a distinctly pro-German slant, which was maintained right up to the Second World War.

The German representatives were not, however, ready to settle with Russia yet. They demanded that Russia first renounce its rights to Poland, the Caucasus, the Baltic States and Ukraine, whose fate would be decided by Germany and its allies, that Russia pay reparations, and so on. The Bolsheviks could not sign such a peace agreement with German imperialists without changing the principles on which they had come to power.

On the 10th February 1918, Trotsky refused to sign the capitulating peace agreement, and unilaterally announced an end to the state of war, and the demobilisation of the army. He calculated that the Germans, exhausted by war, would not be able to attack. However, the Germans immediately pushed the Eastern Front deep into the Russian realm, including the Ukraine. The remnants of the demoralised old army, and detachments of the Red Guard, were unable to halt the Germans. On 3 March 1918, after bitter fights inside the party's Central Committee, the Bolsheviks were forced to conclude what V.I. Lenin described as the "obscene" Treaty of Brest Litovsk. This effectively ceded the Ukraine and other territories to the control of Germany (or the allied Ottomans).

It is difficult to establish Makhno's precise attitude to the Treaty. In his memoirs he claims to have said the following: "By concluding this alliance with the monarchists both the Central Rada and the Bolsheviks are preparing death for the revolution and its champions—the revolutionary toilers".[30] However, we know that during his first alliance with the Bolsheviks (see below) Makhno spoke out against blaming them for colluding with the Germans.[31] Nor did Makhno reproach the Bolshevik leaders for the Brest-Litovsk Treaty during his discussions with them in June 1918.

The Germans' incursions markedly energised the Central Rada's supporters in the anarchist district. They attached great hopes to the Germans. The nationalist leader, P. Semenyut, openly threatened the anarchists with physical reprisals once the Germans had arrived. In response, the anarcho-syndicalists, unbeknownst to Makhno (or so he claimed), declared "revolutionary terror" on the nationalists, and killed Semenyut. Gulyai-Pole found itself on the brink of civil war. Hearing what had happened, Makhno applied all his efforts to get the decision on "revolutionary terror" repealed, and to conclude an agreement with the opposition, thereby averting a bloody vendetta. A joint commission was set up with the nationalists to ban assassinations.[32]

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian nationalists continued to campaign in the district. At the same time the nationalists took steps to prepare a coup in Gulyai-Pole. They began blackmailing the Jewish community, threatening a pogrom once the Germans arrived. After some hesitation, the Jewish leaders decided to help their sworn enemies in order to prevent such reprisals.[33] "Among the

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[30] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 155.

[31] I. Teper (Gordeev), *Makhno: ot "edinogo anarkhizma" k stopam rumynskogo korolya*, Khar'kov, 1924, 26.

[32] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 182–191.

[33] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 148–149.

Jews—shopkeepers, hoteliers, manufacturers—a defeatist mood has once again arisen", claimed M. Goncharok:[34]

> The well-to-do leaders of the community demanded that the Jewish population disband their [national] military company. Rank-and-file volunteers, mainly youths from poor families, refused point blank, regarding this as base treachery in relation to the anarchists and peasant volunteer corps who had entrusted them with weapons. Opinions within the company, however, were split.

This social-psychological reconstruction is inaccurate. The supposed split did not happen—the company decided to obey the Jewish community leaders. Meanwhile the Germans, ousting detachments of SRs, Bolsheviks and anarchists, were approaching the Dnepr.

The Makhnovists formed a "free battalion" which joined the Front. As in January, Makhno gave the role of commander to another man, a sailor called Polonskii, reserving himself the role of political leader. Preparing to defend Gulyai-Pole, Makhno headed towards the headquarters of the Red Guard in order to coordinate actions with other detachments. Gulyai-Pole was meanwhile guarded by the Jewish national company under the command of one Taranovskii. On the night of 15–16 April, the company carried out a coup in Gulyai-Pole in favour of the Ukrainian nationalists, and arrested a group of anarchocommunists. At the same time a detachment of nationalists launched a surprise attack on the "free battalion" and disarmed them.[35]

These events caught Makhno unawares. At one blow he had been deprived of military strength and a support base. It is notable that Makhno was not inclined to blame the Jews for what had happened. In his view, rumours of a "Jewish plot" in the Ukraine "would undoubtedly provoke a pogrom and the massacre of poor innocent Jews, constantly persecuted by everyone in Russian and Ukrainian history and never knowing peace to this day".[36]

Understanding the reasons for the Jewish community's actions, Makhno, returning later on to the Gulyai-Pole district, spoke out against taking revenge on the participants in the coup—i.e. the Jews; he "convinced the peasants and workers that the Jewish toilers, even those who made up the soldiers of the company and were direct participants in its counter-revolutionary activities— will themselves condemn this shameful act".[37] And indeed, in 1919, a Jewish national battalion would be formed in the Makhnovist armed forces.

On the 16 April 1918, participants in a demonstration by the citizens of Gulyai-Pole released the anarchists who had been arrested by the plotters. But it was already impossible to organise the defence of the town: the Germans crossed the Dnepr and soon afterwards entered Gulyai-Pole. Together with the nationalists they set about punishing any anarchists who had not managed to escape.

The nationalists' victory was short-lived, and its hopes in the German forces misplaced. In April 1918, the Germans, along with Ukrainian capitalists and landowners, backed a coup against the Rada and its Republic; this was led by General Pavlo Skoropadsky, who formed the pliant and counter-revolutionary *Hetmanate*, a dictatorial regime. Skoropadsky instituted grain requisitions and land restorations to the *pomeshchiki*, provoking a massive popular backlash. The second

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[34] M. Goncharok, *Vek voli. Russkii anarkhizm i evrei XIX–XX vv.*, Jerusalem: Mishmeret Shalom, 1996, 36.

[35] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 206.

[36] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 149.

[37] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Pod udarami kontrrevolyutsii*, Paris: n.p., 1936, 11.

cycle of Makhnovist activity now began, as the movement played a decisive role in opposing the Germans, the Hetmanate, and the wealthy classes in the Ukraine.

The national liberation struggle, anarchism and the Makhnovist territory

On the 4 July 1918 Makhno, with the help of the Bolsheviks, returned to his native district and put together a small partisan detachment. On the 22 September this began military operations against the Germans. Makhno's detachment engaged in its first battle in the village of Dibrivki (Bolshaya Mikhailovka) on 30th September. Joining with the small Shusya detachment, which had earlier fought as partisans here, Makhno and a group of three dozen men succeeded in crushing the Germans' superior forces. The authority of the new detachment grew in the area, and Makhno himself was given the respectful nickname *Batko* ("little father").

The Battle of Dibrivki marked the beginning of a destructive vendetta—as well as the start of a cycle of military victories against the Germans, the Whites and the nationalists. What happened was that the Germans amassed a considerable force, and carried out a demonstrative execution in Dibrivki, which the partisans were unable to prevent. Inhabitants of the surrounding German farms took part in the punitive expedition. In return, the Makhnovists destroyed the farms and killed participants in a punitive action, and, as Alexey Chubenko recalled:[38]

> Haystacks, straw and houses burned so fiercely that in the streets it was as bright as day. The Germans, having stopped firing, ran out of their homes. But our men shot all the menfolk straight away.

Having burned the *kulak* farms, the rebels, according to Makhno, told the families who had lost their homes: "Go where the Dibrivki peasants, men, women and children … went, those whom your fathers, sons and husbands either killed or raped or whose huts they burned".[39] At the same time, after the first outburst of terror Makhno issued an order not to touch Germans who offered no resistance, and when his commander Petrenko destroyed a peaceful German *kulak* farm, Makhno saw to it that the Germans were paid compensation.[40]

While Makhno stressed the struggle for freedom from foreign powers, he also emphasised his actions had an anti-landowner and anti-*kulak* nature, including opposition to the Ukrainian elite and the nationalist state. The popular army should, for example, take the opportunity to acquire supplies at the expense of the landowners and *kulaks*: "I asked the assembled population to say openly where the *kulaks* lived, people with sheep and cattle, so that we could get two or three sheep from them for soup for our soldiers".[41]

At this point people's courts (*obshchestvennye sudy*) began to operate at peasant gatherings, with authority to decide the fate of the accused. In response to the protests of the anarcho-communist A. Marchenko against this practice, Makhno remarked: "Let him put his sentimental-

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[38] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 47.

[39] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Ukrainskaya revolyutsiya*, Paris, 1937, 112.

[40] Makhno, *Ukrainskaya revolyutsiya*, 112; Central State Archive of the Civil Organisations of Ukraine, D.153, L.27. This archive is hereafter abbreviated as TsDAGOU.

[41] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 74.

ity in his pocket".[42] As a rule, the Makhnovists released any captured German troops. But they sometimes shot civilian Germans as "spies",[43] and commonly, officers. The insurgents' severity towards the *kulaks* only increased their authority in the eyes of the peasants. Makhno began to base his actions on the numerically strong peasant volunteer corps, which he could draw on for major operations—the core of the Makhnovist army. He would notify them in advance of the meeting place. Interestingly, the enemy knew nothing about this.

When revolution broke out in Germany in November 1918, the German backing for the *Hetmanate* was shaken. The nationalists regrouped in the Directory, retook Kiev in December and toppled Skoropadsky, and in January 1919 they united the Ukrainian People's Republic with the separate West Ukrainian People's Republic. Meanwhile, the extensive Priazove district came under Makhnovist control. On 30 December 1918, the *Batko* even briefly occupied Ekaterinoslav, one of the biggest cities in Ukraine, but because of conflicts with his Bolshevik allies he was unable to defend the city from Directory head Symon Vasylyovych Petliura's advancing army.[44]

During this period, Makhno took steps to transform his movement from a destructive peasant uprising to a social revolutionary movement that embodied supreme power in the territory it controlled. But having gained control over a relatively stable swathe of territory, Makhno decided that the time had come to add some proper democratic institutions to the anarcho-military milieu: namely, a Military Revolutionary Soviet (VRS). The constructive work started in 1917 resumed, a conscious effort to create a self-managed anarchist society.

For this purpose the 1st Congress of District Soviets was called on the 23 January 1919 (in the numbering of the 1919 congresses the forums of 1917 were ignored). As in 1917, the Makhno movement regarded the Congresses as the supreme authority. In 1919 three such congresses were held (on the 23 January, 8–12 February, and 10–29 April). Their resolutions, adopted after heated discussions, accorded with anarchist ideas:[45]

> In our insurgent struggle we need a united brotherly family of workers and peasants to defend land, truth and freedom. The second district congress of front-line soldiers insistently calls on their peasant and worker comrades to undertake by their own efforts to build a new, free society in their locale, without tyrannical decrees and orders, and in defiance of tyrants and oppressors throughout the world: a society without ruling landowners, without subordinate slaves, without rich or poor.

Delegates to the congress spoke out sharply against "parasitical bureaucrats" who were the source of these "tyrannical decrees".

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[42] Makhno, *Ukaz. soch.*, 106.

[43] TsDAGOU, F. 5, O 1, D. 274, L. 12.

[44] Aleksandr Shubin, *Makhno i Makhnovskoe dvizhenie*, Moscow: Izd-vo "MIK", 1998, 53–55.

[45] *Protokoly II s'ezda frontovnikov, povstancheskikh, rabochikh i krest'yanskhikh Sovetov, otdelov i podotdelov*, Gulyai-pole, 1919, 25.

Kharkov
Kiev
Mirgorod
Poltava
Konstantinograd
Starobeisk
Lozovaya
Izium
Znamenka
Novomoskovsk
Slavianoserbsk
Uman
Pavlograd
Lugansk
Sentovo
Chaplino
Elizavetgrad
EKATERINOSLAV
Bakhmut
Ternovka
Sinelnikovo
Bolshe-Mikhailovka
Yuzovka
Voznessensk
ALEXANDROVSK
GULYAI-POLYE
Krivoï Rog
Nikopol
Kermenchik
Novocherkassk
Pologi
Rostov
Volnovakha
Taganrog
Orekhov
Tsarekonstantinovka
Andreyevka
Nikolaev
Mariupol
Dniepr
Bolshe-Tokmakh
Novospasovka
Odessa
Kherson
Mélitopol
Berdyansk
Nogaisk
Black Sea
Pérékop
Sea of Azov

- - - - - Makhnovist sphere of influence
. . . . "Makhnovia"

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Fig. 3. The Ukrainian anarchist territory, showing core area of "Makhnovia", and maximum sphere of infuence 1918–1921.

Makhno's staff, who also engaged in cultural and education work, represented an important organ of power, but all their civil (and formally speaking their military) activity was under the control of the executive organ of the congress (the VRS) and a number of educational institutions were established, alongside land redistribution and several cooperative farms. The Bolshevik commander of the Ukrainian Front, Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko, who visited the district in May 1919, reported:[46]

> Children's communes and schools are getting going—Gulyai-Pole is one of the most cultured centres in Novorossiya—here there are three secondary educational institutions and so on. Through Makhno's efforts ten hospitals for the wounded have been opened, a workshop has been organised to repair implements and manufacture locks and equipment.

Children were taught to read and underwent military training, primarily in the form of military games (which were sometimes quite tough).

But the main educational work was carried out not with children but with adults. The VRS' *Kultprosovet* ("Culture and Propaganda Council"), which was responsible for enlightenment and agitation work among the population, was staffed by anarchists and Left SRs who had come to the district. Freedom of agitation was also upheld for other left-wing parties, including Bolsheviks, although the anarchists dominated the district ideologically.

Makhno's conflicts with certain commanders intensified. When the semi-independent commander Fedor Shchus undertook reprisals against German settlers, Makhno responded by arresting him and promised to execute him if it happened again. Shchus, who had only recently demonstrated his independence from Makhno, was no longer capable of withstanding the *Batko*, whose power in the district at this time was based not only on military strength. "Shchus gave his word not to repeat the murders and swore loyalty to Makhno",[47] recalled Chubenko. As a result, Makhno succeeded in maintaining solid discipline among his officers. One of Bolshevik leader Lev Kamenev's assistants recalled Makhno's style of leadership at an officers' meeting during a visit to Gulyai-Pole: "At the slightest noise he would threaten the perpetrator: 'Out with you!' "[48]

The first social-political organisation to carry out and influence Makhno's policies was a Union of Anarchists, which arose from a group of anarcho-communists joined by a number of other anarchist groups. Many Makhnovist officers and anarchists who had come to the district joined the Union. Also, prominent activists in the Makhnovists like Grigory Vasilevskii, Boris Veretelnikov, Alexey Marchenko, Petr Gavrilenko,Vasily Kurilenko, Viktor Belash, Trofim Vdovichenko, and others, were anarchists.

Makhno nonetheless had a sceptical attitude towards the anarchist group *Nabat* ("Alarm"), also known as the Confederation of Anarchist Organisations of the Ukraine: this included leading figures like Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum (known as "Voline"). *Nabat* united newcomers like

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[46] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D.153, L.137–138.
[47] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D.351, L.2.
[48] "Ekspeditsiya L. V. Kameneva v 1919 g.: poezdka na Ukrainu", *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya*, 1925, No. 6, 139.

Voline with some of the urban Ukrainian anarchists (primarily anarcho-syndicalists) in the autumn of 1918, but evidently it represented only one of the various anarchist groupings. Its claims to the leadership of the Makhno movement were unfounded. Makhno did not regard himself as being bound by the decisions of the *Nabat's* April 1918 conference in Elisavetgrad, which were taken in his absence.

It is essential to distinguish the influence of the local anarchists on the development of the movement from that of the urban anarchist newcomers to the region, towards whom the Makhnovists had already developed a sceptical attitude by 1918. However, even here there are some significant exceptions. The most obvious example is Makhno's comrade in penal servitude, Peter Arshinov (also known "Marin"). According to Isaak Teper:[49]

> Marin was in general the only anarchist [anarchist newcomer—AS.] whom Makhno sincerely respected and whose advice he accepted unquestioningly ... He was the only person, as I indicated above, to whom Makhno in general submitted in the full sense of the word.

Arshinov (who had been in jail with Makhno) joined up with him, and together they determined the movement's ideology. Makhno called his own views anarcho-communist "in Bakunin's sense".[50] Later, Makhno proposed the following organisation of state and society: "I envisaged such a structure only in the form of a free *soviet* structure, in which the entire country would be covered by local, completely free, independent, self-governing social organisations of workers",[51] in contrast to Bolshevik and Soviet state centralism.

In late 1918 a delegation of railway workers visited Makhno. According to Chubenko's memoirs, the workers[52]

> ... began asking what they should do in terms of organising power. Makhno replied that they need to organise a *soviet* that should be completely independent, i.e. a free *soviet*, independent of all parties. They then appealed to him for money, since they had no money at all, and needed money to pay the workers, who had received no wages for three weeks. Makhno without saying a word ordered them to be given 20,000 [roubles], and this was done.

In a proclamation on 8 February 1919 Makhno announced the following task: "The building of a genuine Soviet structure in which the *soviets*, chosen by the workers, will be the servants of the people, executing the laws and decrees that the workers themselves will write at the allUkrainian labour congress".[53] Thus for the question of Ukrainian independence, the VRS declared in October 1919:[54]

> When speaking of Ukrainian independence, we do not mean national independence in Petliura's sense, but the social independence of workers and peasants. We declare

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[49] I. Teper, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 32.

[50] Makhno, *Pod udarami kontrrevolyutsii*, 130.

[51] *Anarkhicheskii vestnik*, Berlin, 1923, No.1, 28.

[52] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D.153, L.29.

[53] TsDAGOU, L. 115.

[54] Quoted in Piotr Arshinov, *History of the Makhnovist Movement, 1918–1921*, London: Freedom Press, [1923] 1987,

that Ukrainian, and all other, working people have the right to self-determination not as an 'independent nation', but as 'independent workers'.

The alliance with the Bolsheviks, and the issue of anti-Semitism

Dividing up their respective spheres of influence with the Ukrainian nationalists, the Makhnovists had a large amount of territory and peasant support, and came under attack from the Whites. By the beginning of January, the Makhnovists had already absorbed into their ranks several thousand semi-armed insurgents from Priazove, and were suffering from a lack of ammunition and rifles. After several days' fighting with the Whites they had used up all their ammunition, and the insurgents had been forced back to Gulyai-Pole. They did not want to surrender their "capital". From 24 January to 4 February bitter battles were fought, with varying success.

Notwithstanding their disagreements with the Bolsheviks, the Makhnovists had no option but to unite with them under these circumstances. The Red Army was the only possible source of arms and ammunition. Already at the beginning of January Makhno told Chubenko: "Maybe we will succeed in uniting with the Red Army, which is rumoured to have seized Belgorod and has gone on the offensive along the whole Ukrainian Front. If you run into [the Red Army], form a military alliance with it".[55] Makhno did not give Chubenko authority to conduct any political talks with the Reds, however, and the *Batko*'s emissary was thus confined to announcing that "we are all fighting for Soviet power".

Following talks with Pavel Dybenko on 26 January 1919, the Makhnovists were supplied with ammunition that enabled them to go on the offensive as early as 4 February. By the 17 February, having taken Orekhov and Pologi, the 3rd Brigade of the Makhnovists' First Dnepr Division, under Dybenko's command, occupied Bakhmut. Bolshevik rifles enabled the Makhnovists to arm the peasant reinforcements, who had been waiting in the wings. As a result, the 3rd brigade of the First Dnepr division grew so rapidly that it outnumbered both the original Division and the 2nd Ukrainian army in which the brigade had earlier fought.

Whereas in January Makhno had had around 400 troops, by the beginning of March he had a thousand, by mid-March 5,000, and by April 15—20,000. Having thus carried out this voluntary mobilization, the Makhno forces launched their offensive to the south and to the east. After covering more than 100 km over a period of a monthand-a-half, the Makhnovists captured Berdyansk. Lieutenant-General Anton Ivanovich Denikin's White western bastion was destroyed. At the same time, other Makhnovist units moved the Front a similar distance to the east, entering Volnovakha. The Makhnovists seized a special train from the Whites, loaded with 1,467 metric tons of bread,[56] and sent it on to the starving workers of Moscow and Petrograd.

The Makhnovists' insurgent army was called upon to defend the population and social structures not only from external threats, but from internal threats in the district. Periodic outbursts of lawlessness were, in general, extremely common in this period of the revolution: "In the city robbery, drunkenness, and debauchery are beginning to sweep over the army", declared V. Aussem, commander of a military group within the Red Army, following the occupation of Kharkov.[57]

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[55] V. Verstyuk, *Kombrig Nestor Makhno: Iz istorii pervogo soiuza makhnovtſsev s Sovetskoĭ vlastiu*, Khark'kov: Nabat, 1990, 6.

[56] Or 90,00 *pudi.*

[57] V.A. Antonov Ovseenko, *Zapiski o Grazhdanskoi voine*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1932, vol. 3, 191.

And in another episode: "At the end of April the regiment was waiting at the Teterev station, where Red Army soldiers committed numerous excesses without punishment—they robbed and beat the passengers unmercifully and killed several Jews",[58] recalled Antonov-Ovseenko, describing the exploits of the 9th regiment of the Red Army.

During the revolutionary period, large numbers of civilian Jews were killed in pogroms across the former Russian Empire, including the Ukraine. There were a number of pogroms in Directorate territory (leading the Ukrainian anarchist Jew Sholom Schwartzbard to assassinate Petliura in revenge in Paris in 1926). Here it is appropriate to mention a fragment of conversation between a Ukrainian People's Commissar, A. Zatoniskii, and Red Army soldiers whom he was seeking to persuade not to turn towards Kiev in order to "get even with the Cheka and the Commune": "Finally one quite elderly man asked whether 'it is true that Rakovskii is a Jew, since they say that earlier the Bolsheviks were in control, but now the Jews had established the new communist Rakovskii government.' I assured him that comrade Rakovskii is of the same orthodox lineage as the Communists—they are all Bolsheviks ..".[59] On this occasion his argument was persuasive. But we know that the Red Army participated in numerous pogroms against the Jews.[60]

Anti-Semitism was also rife among a significant section of the Whites. If Chubenko is to be believed, the *ataman* Andrey Shkuro, attempting to get Makhno on his side, wrote to him: "After all you beat up the commissars anyway, and we beat up the commissars, you beat up the Jews and we beat up the Jews, so we've no reason to fight about that ..".[61] Indeed, supporters of the Whites also wrote about their anti-Semitism and pogroms "We don't relate to the 'Yids', just as they don't relate to the 'bourgeoisie'. They shout: 'Death to the bourgeoisie', and we answer: 'Beat up the Yids' ".[62] (The Ukrainian *atamans* were autonomous paramilitary leaders, who easily shifted from nationalist yellow and blue flags, to red banners, or black, and back).

As far as the revolutionary troops are concerned, the outbreaks of lawlessness among soldiers, which were often anti-Semitic, can be explained by the peculiar psychological situation of soldiers in 1918–19. They secured power for the various parties, and regarded themselves as entitled to "impose order" when necessary. This power engendered a feeling that everything was permitted, while the endless interruptions in provisions and wages gave rise to a sense that the authorities were ungrateful. And here, the situation of social catastrophe, marginalisation and radicalism brought to the surface dark anti-Semitic instincts, and fostered the urge to commit pogroms.

Against this background the Makhnovist territory represented a relatively peaceful model. The fact that the Makhnovist army consisted of local peasants constituted a serious obstacle to any lawlessness in the heartland of the movement. The territory was also relatively safe in terms of Jewish pogroms. In general, anti-Semitism was weaker in Priazove than in the Right Bank Ukraine. Moreover, the slightest manifestations of anti-Semitism were severely punished by the Makhnovists. As mentioned above, a Jewish national detachment fought with the Makhno troops. While most members of the Makhnovist forces were ethnic Ukrainians, the movement included Greeks, Caucasians and other groups, and it appealed to the working Cossacks to join up.

The one documented instance of a Makhnovist pogrom—in the Jewish colony of Gorkaya on the night of 11th–12th May—led to a thorough investigation and the execution of the guilty parties.

[58] V.A. Antonov Ovseenko, *Zapiski o Grazhdanskoi voine*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1932, vol. 4, 268.

[59] *Oktyabr'skaya revolyutsiya, 1–2 pyatiletie*, Khar'kov, 1922, 520–521.

[60] See M. Goncharok, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 53–54.

[61] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D. 274, L.36.

[62] V. Sul'gin, *Dni. 1920 g.*, Moscow: Moskva Sovremennik, 1990, 291, 292, 295–296, 298.

A speaker at the investigating commission in Mogil characterised the incident as "a rabid, bloody outburst by half-mad people who had lost their conscience.[63] After this there were no more instances of pogroms on the territory controlled by the Makhnovists, a point well-established in the literature.

As early as January 1919 Makhno himself and his officers took part in savage killings—although arguably not of the systematic nature to be found in territory controlled by other regimes.[64] But after that such reprisals against the peaceful population ceased for a long time. The Makhnovists continued to kill prisoners, as did all the warring armies in the region. The Whites hung captured Makhnovists, and the Makhnovists beheaded captured Whites. The mutual hatred between "peasant" and "gentry" civilizations, based on a cultural rift that went back to the time of Peter the Great, bubbled up to the surface in the bloody carnage of the civil war. The political forces of Russia and Ukraine could not resolve this age-old conflict in any other way, and now the participants in the tragedy were obliged to act with measures adequate to the situation, and notions inherited from their ancestors about the justice of revenge.

Subsequently Makhno came to feel oppressed by this side of the revolution, and he wrote of the harshness of the civil war: "In this harsh struggle the moral aspects of the aim we were pursuing would inevitably be deformed and would appear distorted to everyone until such time as the struggle we undertook was recognised by the whole population as their struggle and until it began to develop and be preserved directly by themselves".[65]

In the spring of 1919, the first union between the Makhno movement and the central Soviet government entered a state of crisis. The Makhnovists defended their vision of free *soviet* power, while the Bolsheviks looked on these peasant fellow-travellers with mistrust. The peasants were disappointed: the communists refused to hand over to them the extensive lands owned by the sugar refineries, turning them into state farms (*sovkhozy*). Then, on the 13th April a system of food requisitions was imposed upon the peasantry.

In Bolshevik-held territory, national conflicts also played a role: the new communist bureaucracy was drawn for the most part from the urban population, the majority being Russians and Jews. Jews were particularly active, since in the Russian empire they had been barred from state jobs. The revolution opened up amazing career opportunities that would have been unthinkable in the past. Encountering an unaccustomedly large number of Jews in their capacity as executors of decisions made by the communist government, the peasants easily decided that "The commune is a realm of Yids". Many peasant uprisings broke out in spring 1919, directed not against *soviet* power as such, but against the Bolsheviks, and as a rule were anti-Semitic.

A further cause of the increasing mutual mistrust between the communists and anarchists was afforded by the *ataman* Nikifor Grigorev, who on the 6 May unleashed a revolt in Right Bank Ukraine.[66] On the 4 May Grigorev's men (then part of the Red Army) launched pogroms against Jews and Bolshevik commissars. The leadership asked Grigorev immediately to put an end to the situation. The *ataman* was faced with a difficult choice: either to continue cooperating with the Bolsheviks (whom part of his army had already turned against), or to maintain unity in the army through an uprising against the Bolsheviks (with whom he, too, had no sympathy).

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[63] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D. 351, L.36.

[64] TsDAGOU, D.274, L.12, 25–26.

[65] Makhno, *Pod udarami kontrrevolyutsii*, 87.

[66] Grigorev had been, by turns, a Russian officer, a supporter of the Central Rada, the *Hetmanate*, and the Directory, and aligned with the Red Army in February 1919.

After some hesitation, he decided to side with his soldiers. On the eve of Grigorev's revolt a representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Ya. Gamarnik, reported that Grigorev's situation was much more favourable than Makhno's.[67]

On the 8 May, Grigorev called in a Universal for an uprising and the creation of a new Soviet Republic in the Ukraine through re-election of all *soviets* on the basis of a system of national government, in which the Ukrainians would get 80 percent of seats, the Jews 5 percent, and the rest 15 percent.[68] But this was just the theory, and in practice the Grigorevists killed Russians and Jews in their thousands. Sixteen thousand Grigorevists dispersed in different directions, which dissipated their resources, and also extended the scope of the uprising almost to the Right Bank (Zeleny and other *atamans* had already been fighting further north since April). The rebels occupied Aleksandriya, Kremenchug, Cherkassy, Uman, Elisavetgrad and Ekaterinoslav, thus approaching Makhno's core territory in earnest.

The Bolsheviks were obliged to urgently deploy their forces against the developing "Grigorev front". The anarchists fought on their side—in particular with the (anarchist) sailor Anatoli Zhelezniakov's Red Army armoured train—although they were increasingly critical of Bolshevik policies. At the same time, however, a group of Red Army soldiers who had been deployed against Grigorev began discussing whether they should join up with the *ataman*.

On the 14–15 May, the Bolsheviks launched a counter-attack from Kiev, Odessa and Poltava, threatening Grigorev's scattered forces. In the second half of May, all the towns Grigorev had seized were cleared of his men. One can agree with Grigorev's biographer, Viktor Savchenko, that "Grigorev proved to have no talent as an officer, lacking as he did the ability either to plan a military operation or to predict the consequences of his actions, and being moreover in a permanent state of anti-Semitic rage".[69]

The main threat posed by the Grigorev uprising lay in the fact that many Ukrainians within the Red Army moved over to his side. At this point, however, what the Bolsheviks feared most was a lack of control over Makhno. Kamenev clearly distrusted Makhno, to whom he sent a telegram, which insisted that in this "decisive moment" he must "Inform me immediately of the disposition of your troops and issue a proclamation against Grigorev … I will regard failure to answer as a declaration of war".[70] Kamenev's attempt to exploit the extreme situation to force Makhno to put his trust unconditionally in the central authorities was unsuccessful. The *Batko* answered ambiguously: "The honour and dignity of revolutionaries oblige us to remain true to the revolution and the people, and Grigorev's outburst against the Bolsheviks in the battle for power cannot force us to abandon the front" against the Whites.[71]

On the 12th of May, a Makhnovist military congress was held, bringing together the commanding officers and representatives of the various units and the political leadership of the Makhno movement, in order to decide on their strategy *vis-à-vis* Grigorev. According to V. Belash, Makhno made the following statement:[72]

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[67] Volkovinskii, *Ukaz. soch.*, 89–90.

[68] V. Savchenko, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 113.

[69] Savchenko, *Ukaz. soch.* 119.

[70] Piotr Arshinov, *Ukaz. soch.* ("Selected Works"), 107.

[71] Arshinov, *Ukaz. soch.*, 109.

[72] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D.274, L.21.

The Bolshevik government of Ukraine has appointed itself the guardian of the workers. It has laid its hands on all the wealth of the country and disposes of it as if it were government property. The Party bureaucracy, once more hanging a privileged upper class around our necks, tyrannises the people. They scoff at the peasants, usurp the rights of the workers, and do not allow the insurgents to breathe. The efforts by the Bolshevik command to humiliate us and Grigorev's men, the tyranny of the Cheka [the Bolshevik's All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage—A.S.] against anarchist and SR organisations, all speak of a return to the despotism of the past.

(The military staff, in fact, sent a message to Kamenev complaining of the emergence of a party dictatorship).

Yet Grigorev took a nationalist position that was alien to the Makhnovists, and the congress decided "immediately to take up armed resistance against Grigorev" pending more information, and meanwhile "to maintain friendly relations with the Bolsheviks". This meeting "on the quiet" also took the decision to expand the Makhnovist 3rd brigade into a division and (with Makhno's and Antonov-Ovseenko's agreement) to begin talks with the Soviet government on according autonomous status to the Mariupol, Berdyansk, Melitopol, Aleksandrov, Pavlograd and Bakhmut districts—in other words, to the Makhno territory and its immediate periphery.[73]

At the same time, Makhno sent his emissaries to the area of the Grigorev mutiny in order to clarify the situation, and, if possible, subvert his forces. This was misconstrued as an attempted to form an alliance with Grigorev; the emissaries were arrested as spies by the Bolsheviks, which meant that the Makhnovists' final decision on strategy towards Grigorev was postponed until the end of May.

Makhno's emissaries were, however, released, and were able to acquaint themselves with and report on the results of Grigorev's raids: the bodies of the victims of Jewish pogroms. At the same time Makhno read Grigorev's Universal, which struck him as chauvinistic. Makhno then issued a proclamation, "Who is Grigorev", which stated:[74]

> Brothers! Surely you must hear in these words the sombre call for a Jewish pogrom! Surely you can feel Ataman Grigorev's attempts to tear apart the living brotherly connection between the revolution in Ukraine and the revolution in Russia? We are convinced that the healthy intuition of the revolutionaries will tell them [soldiers who joined with Grigorev's troops—AS] that Grigorev has duped them and that they will leave him once more under the banner of the revolution.

Makhno went on to say that:[75]

> We have to say that the reasons behind the emergence of Grigorev's whole movement lie not only in Grigorev himself ... Any opposition or protest, indeed any independent initiative has been crushed by the extraordinary commissions ... this has engendered bitterness and protest among the masses and a hostile attitude to the

[73] TsDAGOU D.351, L.31.
[74] Arshinov, *Ukaz. soch.*, 113.
[75] Arshinov, *Ukaz. soch.*, 114.

existing order. Grigorev exploited this in his adventure … we demand that the communist party answer for the Grigorev movement.

The local anarchist press was even more categorical: "It's no secret to anyone", wrote Ya. Alyi in *Nabat*, "that all the activities of the Bolshevik party are aimed solely at keeping power in their party's hands and not giving any other tendencies the chance to propagate their ideas ..".[76] The commissars "through their clumsiness and their imperious style have set the insurgents against the Bolsheviks and handed a trump card to the Black Hundreds" and "Only the clumsy and anti-revolutionary policies of the Bolsheviks could have given this opportunity to Grigorev and his company to exploit the dissatisfaction of the masses and lead them into these black, treacherous deeds".

Makhno's statement against Grigorev could not alter the Bolshevik leadership's position with regard to the anarchists. The transformation of his 3rd brigade into a division further aggravated relations between the two parties. The Makhnovist army represented a foreign body practically within the Red Army, and it is not surprising that, by February 1919, Trotsky was demanding that it be reorganised on the model of the other Red units. Makhno replied boldly:[77]

> The autocrat Trotsky has ordered us to disarm the Insurgent Army of Ukraine, an army created by the peasants themselves, for he understands very well that so long as the peasants have their own army, he will never succeed in forcing the Ukrainian working people to dance to his tune. The Insurgent Army, not wishing to spill fraternal blood, avoiding clashes with the Red Army, but submitting only to the will of the workers, will stand guard over the interest of the workers and lay down arms only on the orders of the free all-Ukrainian Congress of Labour through which the workers themselves will express their will.

Conflicts between the Makhnovists and the Bolsheviks grew. The Makhnovist congresses criticised Bolshevik policies, while the communist leaders demanded an end to the movement's independence. Supplies to the Makhnovists were stopped, putting the front at risk. Bolshevik propaganda reported the Makhnovists' poor state of battle readiness, although later the army commander Antonov-Ovseenko wrote: "above all the facts bear witness that statements about the weakness of the most vulnerable place—the district of Gulyai-Pole, Berdyansk—are untrue. On the contrary, precisely this corner turned out to be the liveliest on the whole Southern Front (according to the April–May reports). And this is not of course because we were better organised and equipped in military terms but because the troops here were directly defending their own homes".[78]

Makhno's decision to transform his excessively swollen brigade into a division was construed by the Bolsheviks as a lack of discipline, and their Southern Front commanders finally took the decision to crush the Makhnovists. The Bolsheviks clearly overestimated their own strength, all the more so since it was precisely at this point that Denikin's forces launched an attack.[79] They

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[76] *Nabat*, No. 16, 26 May 1919.

[77] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D.153, L.116–117.

[78] Antonov-Ovseenko, *Zapiski o Grazhdanskoi voine*, vol. .4, 331.

[79] Cf. Aleksandr Shubin, *Anarkhiya—mat' poryadka. Nestor Makhno kak zerkalo Rossiiskoi revolyutsii*, Moscow: Eksmo, 2005, 202–212.

struck the junction of the Makhnovists and the Red Army just at the moment that the Bolsheviks were attacking the Makhnovist rear. To resist the pressure on both fronts was impossible.

On 6 June 1919 Makhno sent a telegram to the Bolshevik leadership, stepping down from his position in an attempt to avert conflict, and asking that "a good military commander who, having acquainted himself through me with our business here, would be able to receive from me the command of the division".[80] On the 9 June he telegraphed Lenin, repeating the offer and complaining that "the Central Government regards all insurgency as incompatible with its governmental activity", and had set itself on a path that would "lead with fateful inevitability to the creation of a special internal front, on both sides of which will be the working masses who believe in the revolution … an enormous and never-to-be-forgiven crime before the working people".[81]

The Bolsheviks attempted to arrest Makhno, but with a small detachment he evaded his pursuers. The Cheka then shot some of the *Batko's* staff, including their own envoy, chief of staff Ozerov. Recognising that this was the end for his staff, Makhno embarked on a partisan war in the rear of the Reds, who had launched a military campaign against the Makhnovist region.

Partisan war in the rear of the Reds and Whites

Makhno seems to have tried to keep his distance from the rear of the Red Army in order not to hinder unduly their defence against Denikin. According to the memoirs of Voline (who joined Makhno's army and became head of the culture and enlightenment commission of the VRS), Makhno said that 'Our main enemy, comrade peasants, is Denikin. The communists after all are still revolutionaries". But he added: "We'll be able to settle our scores with them later".[82]

Nevertheless, on 12th June Makhno unsuccessfully attacked Elizavetgrad, which was occupied by the Red Army. On the following day, the Makhnovists encountered the remnants of Grigorev's detachments. The first encounter left no doubt as to Grigorev's intentions: "When Grigorev said … do you have any Yids, somebody answered that we did.

He declared: 'then we'll beat them up'", recalled Chubenko.[83] United on the need to fight both the Bolsheviks and Petliura's men, the *ataman* could not agree on the question of the Whites: "Makhno said that we would beat up Denikin. Grigorev objected to this … he had not yet seen Denikin and was therefore not planning to fight him".[84]

To this Makhno made cautious objections, implying that he had only slight disagreements with the Grigorev Universal. Makhno's actions were explained at a meeting of his staff, discussing their strategy in relation to Grigorev:[85]

> Makhno started saying that, come what may, we had to unite, since we didn't yet know what kind of people he had, and we would always be able to shoot Grigorev. We needed to capture his people: they were innocent victims, so that come what may we had to unite.

[80] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1., D. 351, L.77.

[81] TsDAGOU, L.81.

[82] TsDAGOU, D.330, L.14.

[83] TsDAGOU, D.274, L.40.

[84] TsDAGOU, L.41–42.

[85] TsDAGOU, L.42–43.

Makhno succeeded in convincing his staff: the need for more people was obvious, and the prospect of eventually liquidating Grigorev reassured those who opposed any compromise with this perpetrator of pogroms. Grigorev became a Makhnovist commander (Makhno as the chair of the VRS was formally his superior) but his actions soon showed that such a union would discredit the Makhnovists.

On the 27 June, at a meeting where Grigorev was surrounded by Makhnovist officers, Chubenko (according to a pre-arranged plan) launched an indictment. "First I told him that he was encouraging the bourgeoisie: when he took hay from the *kulaks*, he would pay money for it, but when he took it from the poor and they came to him begging, since this was their last hope, he drove them away … Then I reminded him how he had shot a Makhnovist for grabbing an onion from a priest and swearing at the priest".[86] It was typical that Grigorev should have executed someone for insulting a priest, while Makhno executed for murdering the Jews. However, the main accusation was that Grigorev had refused to attack the Whites who had occupied Pletenyi Tashlyk. The *ataman* attempted to argue but, having understood where all this was leading, seized his gun. The Makhnovists already had their pistols ready and Grigorev was killed.

It seemed that Makhno was fulfilling his plan in relation to Grigorev and his men. They were disarmed, and after appropriate campaigning work incorporated into the Makhnovist detachment. With a sense of a duty fulfilled, Makhno sent a telegram into the ether: "To everyone, everyone, everyone. Copy to Moscow, the Kremlin. We have killed the well-known *ataman* Grigorev. Signed—Makhno".[87] While despatching this telegram to the Kremlin, Makhno also issued a proclamation concerning the assassination of Grigorev, in which he said: "We have the hope that after this there won't be anyone to sanction pogroms against the Jews … but that the working people will honourably take a stand [against enemies] such as Denikin … and against the Bolshevik communists, who are introducing a dictatorship".[88] On the 5 August, Makhno published a proclamation stating that:[89]

> Every revolutionary insurgent should remember that all people of the wealthy bourgeois class, irrespective of whether they are Russians, Jews, Ukrainians or any other nationality, are both his personal enemies and enemies of the people. Those who protect the unjust bourgeois order, i.e. Soviet commissars, members of the punitive detachments, extraordinary commissions who drive around the towns and villages and torture working people who don't wish to submit to their tyrannical dictatorship.
>
> Every insurgent is under obligation to arrest representatives of these punitive detachments, extraordinary commissions and other organs for enslaving and persecuting the people, and dispatch them to army headquarters, and in case of resistance to shoot them on the spot. But those guilty of using force against peaceful workers, regardless of their nationality, will succumb to a shameful death unworthy of a revolutionary insurgent.

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[86] TsDAGOU, L.46–47.

[87] Kubanin, *Ukaz. soch.*, 83.

[88] Quoted in Goncharok, *Ukaz. soch.*, 59.

[89] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 154–155.

However, it proved impossible to overcome the anti-Semitism of Grigorev's men, and soon Makhno was forced to dismiss these extra troops. He had to find another way to replenish his troops. Under pressure from Denikin, the Bolsheviks were forced to retreat from Ukraine. But the soldiers themselves did not want to retreat to Russia. On the 5 August those units that had been left under the command of the Bolsheviks rejoined Makhno. The *Batko* was once again in charge of an army of thousands.

By late September, the Makhnovists' situation had become critical. Denikin's superior forces pursued them through the entire Ukraine, pushing them into the Uman district where Petliura's forces had their stronghold. The local population did not support the Makhnovists, who were strangers to these parts. Progress was impeded by the caravan of wounded men. In these circumstances, Makhno entered a temporary alliance with Petliura, who was also fighting Denikin. Having transferred the wounded to his apparent ally (later Petliura, breaking his agreement with Makhno, handed them to the Whites), the Makhnovists turned back and attacked the units of Deniken's Voluntary Army that had been pursuing them.

The sudden strike delivered by the Makhnovists at Peregonovka on the 26–27 September was shattering.[90] One of the enemy's regiments was captured, two fully destroyed. The Makhnovist army broke into the rear of Denikin's army, and moved through the entire Ukraine in three columns in the direction of the Gulyai-Pole district. "Operations against Makhno were extremely difficult. Makhno's cavalry was particularly effective, being at first incredibly elusive; it often attacked our wagons, would appear in the rear and so on". In general "the Makhnovist 'troops' differ from the Bolsheviks in their military skill and fortitude",[91] recounted Colonel Dubego, head of staff of the Whites' 4th division. Denikin's headquarters at Taganrog now came under threat. The infrastructure of the Voluntary Army was destroyed, which hampered Denikin's efforts to move north towards Moscow. He was forced to redeploy *ataman* Shkuro's frontline units in order to contain the rapidly expanding zone controlled by the Makhnovists.

Having recovered from this first blow, Denikin's army recaptured the coastal towns and turned towards Gulyai-Pole. But at this moment Makhno was plotting an unbelievably daring manoeuvre. "25 October in Ekaterinoslav was market day", recalled a member of the Ekaterinoslav Committee of the Communist Party:[92]

> Lots of carts rolled into town from the steppe, loaded with vegetables and especially with cabbages. At around 4 p.m. a deafening machine-gun battle erupted in the upper market: it turned out that machine guns were concealed in the carts under the cabbages, and the vegetable traders were an advance detachment of Makhnovists. This detachment was followed by the entire army, which appeared out of the steppe, whence Denikin's army were not expecting to be attacked.

Denikin's men managed to repulse the attack, but their defences were weakened. On the 11th November Ekaterinoslav passed for one month (up until 19 December) into the hands of the Makhnovists. During this time 40,000 men were fighting under Makhno's command.[93]

In the liberated area, the constructive anarchist project resumed yet again. Multi-party congresses of peasants and workers took place. All enterprises were transferred into the hands of

[90] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 72–76.
[91] Quoted in Volkovinskii, *Ukaz. soch.*, 133.
[92] *Pyataya godovshchina Oktyabr'skoi revolyutsii*, Ekaterinoslav, 1933, 227.
[93] Kubanin, *Ukaz. soch.*, 162.

those working in them. Peasants producing foodstuffs, and workers who found consumers for their products—bakers, shoemakers, railway workers and so on— benefited from this system of "market socialism". However, workers employed in heavy industry were dissatisfied with the Makhnovists, and supported the Mensheviks. The Makhnovists set up a system of benefits for the needy, which were distributed without undue red tape to virtually all those wishing to receive Soviet money. Using more reliable forms of currency, obtained in battle, the Makhnovists bought weapons, and published literature and anarchist newspapers.

The inhabitants of Ekaterinoslav assessed each of the various armies that came to the city in terms of the amount of pillaging that took place. Against the general background of the Civil War, the measures Makhno took against pillaging could be regarded as satisfactory. According to the testimony of one of the city's inhabitants "general pillaging of the kind one got under the Volunteer Army did not happen under the Makhnovists" and "The reprisals that Makhno himself took single-handed against several robbers caught at the bazaar made a great impression on the population; he immediately shot them with his revolver".[94]

A more serious problem was the Makhnovists' counter-intelligence service—an out-of-control organ that permitted arbitrary violence against peaceful citizens. Voline confirmed:[95]

> … a whole string of people came to me with complaints, which forced me constantly to intervene in cases of counter-intelligence and to appeal to Makhno and to the intelligence service. But the wartime situation and the requirements of my cultural-educational work prevented me from investigating more thoroughly the alleged abuses by counter- intelligence.

Makhnovist counter-intelligence officers shot several dozen people, a great many fewer than the equivalent organs of the Whites and the Reds. But there is no doubt that among those shot were not only White spies, but the Makhnovists' political opponents, such as the communist commander M.L. Polonskii, whom the service alleged to be fomenting a plot against Makhno. Makhno later admitted: "In the course of the work of the counter-intelligence organs of the Makhnovist army mistakes were sometimes committed which caused us to suffer spiritually, blush and apologise to those injured".[96]

In December 1919 the Makhnovist army was locked down by an epidemic of typhus. Thousands of soldiers, including their commanders, were temporarily unable to fight. This allowed the Whites for a short time to regain Ekaterinoslav, but by then the Red Army had already entered the region in which the Makhnovists were active.

Despite the fact that Makhno's real military strength had significantly declined (due to the outbreak of typhus in the army), the Bolshevik command continued to fear the anarchist forces. It decided to resort to a stratagem of military cunning, behaving as if there had been no execution of Makhnovist staff by the Cheka, no order to hand Makhno over to a military tribunal, and no "Polkonskii affair". That is, behaving as if the old alliance was still in effect.

The Bolsheviks ordered Makhno to leave his district (where the local population supported the insurgents), and move towards the Polish Front. On the way they planned to disarm the Makhnovists. On the 9 January 1920, without waiting for an answer from Makhno, the All-Ukrainian

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[94] Kubanin, *Ukaz. soch.*, 186.
[95] TsDAGOU, F.5, O1, D.330, L.116.
[96] Nestor Ivanovich Makhno, *Makhnovshchina i ee byvshie soyuzniki bol'sheviki*, Paris: n.p., 1929, 44–45.

Revolutionary Committee (*revkom*) charged him extra judicially. On the 14 January the demand to disarm was issued. On the 22 January, Makhno declared his willingness to "march hand in hand" with the Red Army, while still preserving his own independence. At this point more than two divisions of Reds were already carrying out military operations against the Makhnovists, of whom only a few remained in fighting form after the epidemic.

"It was decided to give the insurgents one month's leave", the Makhnovists' head of staff, Belash, recalled. "One Soviet regiment came from the direction of Ekaterinoslav to Nikopol; it occupied the city and began to disarm the typhus-infected Makhnovists … In the city itself there were over 15,000 insurgents with typhus. Our commanders were all shot, whether sick or healthy".[97] An exhausting partisan war began against the Reds. The Makhnovists attacked the smaller detachments, and people working in the Bolshevik apparatus, and warehouses. They put a stop to the existing food requisition system, handing out to the peasants the bread that the Bolsheviks had appropriated. Soon, there were almost 20,000 soldiers in Makhno's army. In the area where they operated the Bolsheviks were obliged to go underground, emerging in the open only when accompanying large military units.

The last alliance and the last skirmish

But Makhno's actions undermined the rear of the Red Army to such an extent that they contributed to the successes of General Pyotr Nikolayevich Wrangel's White Army. Makhno did not want to play into the hands of the landowners, and on 1 October 1920 he struck a new alliance with the Bolsheviks. His army, and the Gulyai-Pole region, were to retain full autonomy, and anarchists in Ukraine were to have freedom to agitate, and be released from Bolshevik prisons. The Makhnovists quickly succeeded in dislodging Wrangel's army from their district. Peace was restored to Gulyai-Pole. Around 100 anarchists came to the district, and engaged in cultural and educational work.

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[97] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 99.

Fig. 4. Makhnovist troops pore over the draft second alliance with the Bolsheviks, Starobelsk, September 1920.

The cream of the Makhnovist troops (with 2400 sabres, 1900 bayonets, 450 machine guns and 32 guns) under the command of Semen Karetnikov (Makhno himself was wounded in the leg) continued their attack on Wrangel under the general command of the Reds. At the same time the Red Army began mobilizing additional troops, and the peasants responded more favourably to this, in light of the alliance between Makhnovists and the Bolsheviks. A peasant volunteer corps took part in storming Perekop, and Karetnikov's cavalry and a detachment of Foma Kozhin's machine-gunners participated in the assault on Sivash, in which four Red divisions were also involved.

With victory over the Whites, new trials loomed for Makhno and the anarchists. On 26 November 1920, with no declaration of war, the Bolsheviks launched an attack on them. Already that morning Karetnikov and his staff had been summoned to a meeting with the Bolshevik commander of the Southern Front, Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze: here they were arrested and shot. But with Karetnikov's units things were not so simple: they scattered the Red units that had surrounded them and with great losses forced their way through from the Crimea. North of Perekop the group clashed with superior Red Army forces, after which only 700 cavalry and 1500 bayonets remained.

In Gulyai-Pole there were more grounds for concern. On the afternoon of the 26 November it became known that the Makhnovist staff in Kharkov had been arrested (some of its members would be shot in 1921). On the night of 25–26 November around 350 anarchists were also arrested, including Voline, Mrachnyi, and anarchist instigators of workers' strikes in Kharkov.

Units of the 42nd division and two brigades attacked Gulyai-Pole from three sides. One cavalry brigade attacked the Makhnovists from the rear. After shooting at the Red Army units attacking from the south, the Makhnovists left Gulyai-Pole and headed east. An international Bolshevik cavalry brigade entered the town from the north. The units that had pressed in from the south, suspecting nothing, attacked the cavalry that had occupied Gulyai-Pole. A heated battle broke out between the two groups of Reds, which allowed the Makhnovists to escape. On the 7 December, Makhno joined up with Marchenko's cavalry detachment, which had pushed through from the Crimea.

But at this point, Frunze deployed units from three armies (including two cavalry units) against Makhno. Virtually the entire Red force of the Southern Front fell on the anarchist insurgents, on its way destroying smaller groups that had not succeeded in joining up with Makhno. One small detachment was overwhelmed along the way by partisan units that had survived the first blow. The Makhnovists were also joined by soldiers from Red Army units that they defeated.

After several unsuccessful attempts to surround the insurgents, a huge number of Red Army troops drove them back to the Andreevka district on the Azov coast. On the 15 December the Red Army command reported to the Soviet cabinet (*sovnarkom*): "continuing our offensive from the south, west and north on Andreevka, our units after a battle captured the outlying districts of this point; the Makhnovists, squeezed from all sides, bunched together in the centre of the settlement and continue stubbornly to hold the line".[98] It seemed that the Makhnovist epic had drawn to a close.

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[98] Russian State Archive of Social-Political History (RGASPI), F.5, O1, D.2475, L.10.

However, Frunze had not reckoned with the unique character of the Makhnovist army. Having explained the task, Makhno dispatched his army in all four directions, in full confidence that it would gather at the appointed place in the rear of the enemy and launch an attack. Moreover, the Makhnovist army was highly mobile: it could move almost entirely on horseback and in machine-gun carts, achieving speeds of up to 85 kilometres a day.[99]

All this helped the Makhnovists, on the 16 December, to escape from the trap that Frunze had prepared. "Already by this time, during the battle, small groups of Makhnovists evaded our units and stole into the north-east ... the Makhnovists approached the village and opened confused fire in the darkness, thereby successfully causing panic among the Red Army units and forcing the latter to scatter",[100] recalled a Red Army officer. Hunkered down in their machine gun carts, the Makhnovists emerged into a strategic space from which to threaten oncoming Red Army units, who had never imagined that the enemy would break out of its encirclement.

The Bolsheviks' inability to defeat the Makhnovists by military means prompted them to step up Red Terror. On 5 December, the armies of the Southern Front were given the order to carry out comprehensive searches, to shoot any peasants who did not hand in their weapons, and to impose contributions on villages within whose precincts Red Army units had been attacked. This purge of the Makhno movement even affected those who had subsequently moved over to the Communist Party. Thus at the end of December the entire local revolutionary committee (*revkom*) in Pologi was arrested, and several of its members executed on the grounds that they had served under Makhno in 1918 (i.e. in the period of the war with the Germans). In order not to unnecessarily endanger the people of his territory, Makhno crossed the Dnepr in December and moved deep into the Right Bank Ukraine. This move seriously weakened the Makhnovists: they were not known in these parts, the area was unfamiliar, and the sympathies of the local peasants inclined towards Petliura's men, with whom the Makhnovists had cool relations. At the same time, units of three Red cavalry divisions moved forward against the Makhnovists. Bloody battles took place in the area around the Gornyi Tikich river. The Makhnovists moved so swiftly that they were able to take the commander of one of the divisions, Alexandr Parkhomenko, unaware; he was killed on the spot. But the Makhnovists were unable to resist the onslaught of the enemy's superior forces in alien territory. After sustaining great losses at Gronyi Tikich, the Makhnovists withdrew to the north and crossed the Dnepr at Kanev. They then carried out a raid through the Poltava and Chernigov districts, and moved on to Belovodsk.

In mid-February 1921, Makhno returned to his native district. He was now obsessed with a new idea: to spread his movement widely, gradually attracting more and more new territories and creating reliable bases everywhere. Only thus would it possible to tear asunder the ring of Red Army forces that surrounded his mobile army. But this led to the dispersal of Makhno's forces. In April Makhno had up to 13,000 troops under his general command, but by May he was able to deploy only around 2,000 men under the command of Kozhin and Kurilenko to deliver a decisive strike in the Poltava area. At the end of June and beginning of July, Makhno's shock troops suffered a painful blow at Frunze's hands in Sula. By this time almost 3,000 Makhnovists had voluntarily surrendered to the Red Army.

The movement was melting away before Makhno's eyes. Once the New Economic Policy (NEP) had been declared, removing the hated impositions of War Communism, many peasants no

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[99] Or 80 *versts.*

[100] *Sbornik trudov voenno-nauchnogo obshchestva pri Voennoi akademii*, Moscow 1921, 219.

longer wanted to fight. But Makhno had no intention of being captured. With a small detachment of a few dozen men he managed to cross the entire Ukraine and reach the Romanian border. Several cavalry divisions attempted to track down this detachment, but on 28 August 1921 it made its way across the Dnestr to Bessarabia. Once in Romania, the Makhnovists were disarmed by the authorities. Nestor and his wife Galina Kuzmenko settled in Budapest.

The Bolsheviks demanded that he be handed over, and in April 1922 Makhno chose to move on to Poland. Here, too, Soviet diplomats sought to have him extradited as a criminal. Meanwhile, Makhno did not conceal his views, continuing to campaign for free *soviet* power, and for safety's sake the Polish administration sent this group of Russian anarchists to a camp for displaced persons. The Poles suspected Makhno of attempting to foment rebellion in Eastern Galicia in favour of the Soviet-ruled Ukraine.

The prosecutor of the Warsaw circuit court was evidently not interested in investigating in detail the disagreements among the revolutionaries, and came to his own interpretation of Makhno's statements in support of the *soviets*, revolution, communism and the free selfd etermination of Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia. On 23 May 1922 criminal charges were brought against Makhno. On 25 September 1922 Makhno, his wife, and two of their comrades, Ivan Khmara and Ya. Dorozhenko, were arrested and sent to Warsaw prison.

On the 27 of November, Makhno stood before a court for the second time in his life. He was accused of contacts with the Soviet mission in Warsaw, and with planning an uprising. When the absurdity of this charge became obvious, the prosecutor started arguing that Makhno was not a political *émigré* but a bandit. There was always the threat that Poland would use the prisoners as small change in the diplomatic game and hand them over to the Bolsheviks.

The criminal charges were not proved, and on 30 November Makhno was acquitted. He settled in Toruni, where he began to publish his memoirs and prepare for new battles. At the same time Arshinov published the first *History of the Makhnovist Movement* in Berlin.[101] With Makhno openly declaring his intention to pursue armed struggle against the Bolsheviks, the Polish government expelled him from the country in January 1924. By this time it was clear that any attempt in the near future to foment rebellion on Soviet territory was doomed to failure. Makhno crossed Germany to Paris, where he lived the remainder of his days.

Conclusions

Makhno's final years were not as stormy as his earlier days, but there was none of the quiet fading away that marked the lives of many *émigrés*. In Paris Makhno found himself at the centre of political discussions, and once more "got on his horse". The French anarchist Ida Mett recalled that Makhno[102]

> … was a great artist, unrecognisably transformed in the presence of a crowd. In a small gathering he had difficulty expressing himself, since his tendency to loud speech-making seemed comical and inappropriate in intimate surroundings. But no sooner did he appear in a large auditorium than one saw a brilliant, eloquent, self-confident orator. Once I was present at a public meeting in Paris where the ques-

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[101] Arshinov, *History.*
[102] Makhno, *Vospominanija*, 129.

tion of anti-Semitism and the Makhno movement was being discussed. I was deeply struck on that occasion by the power of transformation of which this Ukrainian peasant was capable.

Makhno became, with Arshinov and others, one of the authors of the *Organisational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists:* this advocated anarchist struggle on the basis of tight theoretical and organisational unity and provoked heated debates in international anarchist circles in 1926–31.[103]

Makhno spent his last years in a one-room apartment in the Parisian suburb of Vincennes. He suffered from severe tuberculosis, and was badly troubled by the wound in his leg. He worked as a carpenter, stage-hand and factory worker, and his wife supported the family by working as a laundress in a boarding house. Sometimes Makhno wandered the streets. Left-wing organisations held meetings against fascism which at times led to clashes. Given Makhno's character, it is quite possible that he took part in some of these. For a seriously ill sufferer from tuberculosis, this was mortally dangerous. His health deteriorated, and he died on 6 July 1934. Galina and their daughter, Helena, were later deported to Germany as forced labour, and Galina got a further sentence of hard labour under the Soviets after they occupied Germany.

Makhno remains in history as a rebel and the personification of the distinctive nature of the revolution and the civil war in Ukraine. At the same time he was an internationalist and a mirror of the whole Russian revolution—not only its Ukrainian theatre—with its tragic collision between the communist agenda and the primordial spirit of the people, a man who sought to synthesise struggles against all authoritarianism and domination with a class-based social revolution via the anarchist project.

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[103] Cf. Aleksandr Shubin, *Anarkhistskii sotsial'nyi eksperiment. Ukraina i Ispaniya. 1917–1939*, Moscow: Institut vseobshchei istorii RAN, 1998, 106–133.

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Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism, and Nationalism in Ireland

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> *The young working class of Ireland, formed as it was in an atmosphere saturated with heroic memories of national rebellion, and coming into conflict with the egotistically narrow and imperially arrogant trade unionism of Britain, has wavered accordingly between nationalism and syndicalism, and is always ready to link these conceptions together in its revolutionary consciousness.*

Leon Trotsky, 1916.[1]

On Sunday 20 January 1907 Big Jim Larkin disembarked from a crosschannel ferry at Belfast to attend the British Labour Party annual conference and, he hoped, re-organise the Irish ports for the Liverpoolbased National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL).[2] He made his way with a slouching, gangly gait, without which Irish history might have been quite different. The cumbersomeness had denied him a place in the senior team at Liverpool Football Club, and he was not a man to stay in the reserves.[3]

For the watching detectives, he was easy to read. A black broadbrimmed hat provided the bohemian touch affected by British socialists of the *fin de siècle*, while his muscular frame, shovel-like hands, worn old great-coat, and thick, droopy moustache, betrayed his fifteen years as a Merseyside docker. Less obviously, Belfast was a kind of homecoming for Larkin. Though he is not known to have set foot in Ireland since his birth in Liverpool in 1874, his parents had emigrated from Ulster, and he would insist, from 1909 at latest, that he too was an Ulsterman, born and bred in the maternal family homestead in south Down.[4] Coincidentally, in that year, he left the NUDL to launch the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (ITGWU), and begin the "conflict with the egotistically narrow and imperially arrogant trade unionism of Britain".

Two others who would be instrumental in the pursuit of syndicalism and industrial unionism in Ireland were James Connolly and William O'Brien. Connolly was the polar opposite of

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[1] *Nashe Slovo*, 4 July 1916, quoted in D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, (ed.), *The Communists and the Irish Revolution*, Dublin: LiterÉire, 1993, 59–60.

[2] There have been relatively few studies of Larkin. See Emmet Larkin, *James Larkin: Irish Labour Leader, 1874–1947*, Routledge: London, 1965; Donal Nevin (ed.), *James Larkin: Lion of the Fold*, Gill and Macmillan: Dublin, 1998; and Emmet O'Connor, *James Larkin*, Cork University Press, 2002.

[3] "The autobiography of Seán McKeown", 23. I am obliged to Neal Garnham for a copy of this unpublished memoir. Larkin appointed McKeown's father, Michael, as secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) in Belfast in 1907.

[4] The family tradition is discussed in Jim Larkin, *In The Footsteps of Big Jim: A Family Biography*, Dublin: Blackwater Press, 1995, 3–11.

Larkin in temperament and style, but they had much in common in their background and politics. Connolly also claimed an Ulster nativity, although he was born in Edinburgh in 1868: at least his parents were of that opinion.[5] Following activism in the Scottish wing of the Social Democratic Federation, Connolly settled in Dublin in 1896, and founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party on the theses with which he is most identified: the Irish national struggle was also a social struggle, only the working class could complete the struggle, and only socialism could guarantee real economic independence. In 1903 he moved on to the United States (US). He had already been attracted to the ideas of Daniel De Leon and the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), and would be impressed by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The essence of his revolutionary industrial unionism was summed up in his pamphlet *Socialism Made Easy* in 1908.

Returning to Dublin in 1910, Connolly became an official of the ITGWU in 1911, and succeeded Larkin as head of the union in 1914. In public history, both were equally towering leaders at this time, and complimentary book-ends: Connolly being the political revolutionist and nationalist, and Larkin being the union agitator and internationalist.[6] In reality, Larkin was by far the more important of the two during the first phase of syndicalist unrest, from 1907 to 1914: indeed militancy in these years was usually called "Larkinism".

Brilliant as a polemicist, Connolly was never very effective as an agitator: according to the wags, the Irish Socialist Republican Party had more syllables than members. And it was Larkin who first consolidated a socialist republican voice within the Labour movement, for whilst there is no evidence that either influenced—or liked—the other, both reached similar conclusions on Labour strategy and on the national question.[7] Connolly's influence followed his execution by a British firing squad in the wake of the Easter Rising of 1916, which made him Labour's national martyr. *Socialism Made Easy* would have a seminal impact on the ITGWU during the second wave of syndicalism, from 1917 to 1923.

O'Brien had been a disciple of Connolly's in the Irish Socialist Republican Party.[8] Born in Cork in 1881, he worked as a tailor in Dublin until 1917, and was a prominent behind-the-scenes director of operations in the engine rooms of various Labour initiatives. O'Brien had nothing of Larkin's charisma or Connolly's interest in theory. Cold and reserved, his *forté* was administration rather than agitation. Equally, he was shrewd, capable, and ruthless in his ambition. Joining the ITGWU in 1917, he soon became the most powerful officer in Ireland's most powerful union; a status he guarded jealously until his retirement in 1946. Enigmatically, he combined a near filial devotion to Connolly with a pragmatic, managerial approach to trade unionism. His relevance to this story rests chiefly on his pursuit of industrial unionism in the 1930s, which forms a postscript to Irish syndicalism.

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[5] See Fintan Lane, "James Connolly's 1901 census return", *Saothar*, 25, 2000, 103– 106. Connollyology grows apace. There were some 200 publications on Connolly in 1980, and 350 in 2007. The most recent and comprehensive biography is Donal Nevin, *James Connolly: 'A Full Life'*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2005.

[6] See Emmet O'Connor, "Red Jim was a green man", *Irish Democrat*, March–April, 2002.

[7] To distinguish them from the mass of labour, activists in trade unions, trades councils, or Labour political groups will be referred to as "Labour" or "Labourites". Similarly, to distinguish them from trade unionists, the usual convention is adopted here of referring to supporters of the Union with Britain with a capital 'U', whether members of the Unionist Party or not.

[8] The one substantial biography is Thomas J. Morrissey, *William O'Brien, 1881– 1968: Socialist, Republican, Dáil Deputy, Editor and Trade Union Leader*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007.

There was never a formally syndicalist organisation in Ireland— even if the ITGWU came close at times—which partly explains why the phenomenon has been virtually ignored by historians.[9] Neither was there a tradition of socialist debate in the Labour movement. An Irish Trades Union Congress (ITUC), modelled on its British namesake, had been founded in 1894. Notionally, it created a Labour Party in 1912, but the party did not contest a general election until 1922.

What Irish syndicalism amounted to was Larkinism and, from 1917 to 1923, Connolly's "industrial unionism", and these were applied to structures that were not syndicalist in conception. Irish syndicalism was therefore amorphous, and contingent. And yet it had a major and recognizable impact on Labour for two reasons. First, it seemed to answer the problem of how to unionize the mass of workers in an undeveloped economy. Secondly, it interacted with the redefinition of Labour in Ireland as an Irish Labour movement.

Leon Trotsky's observation on the Easter Rising exaggerated the revolutionism of Irish workers in 1916: Connolly's Irish Citizen Army led little more than 200 workers to join the Irish Volunteers in the Rising. But Trotsky did grasp the triangle of factors—syndicalism, nationalism, and British trade unionism—that were shaping Labour's evolution at this time. Ireland in the 1900s was notionally a region of the British Labour movement. The more radical activists were coming to question the value of the link with British Labour, and syndicalism and industrial unionism appeared to offer a better alternative. As one could not build an Irish movement without breaking away from British unions, nationalism and syndicalism became inextricably connected.

Transport and general unionism

The history of Irish trade unionism in the 19th century mirrored the country's uneven economic development.[10] Supplying food and textiles to emergent industrial Britain and provisioning the transatlantic trade in the 18th century had stimulated an "economic miracle" in Ireland. A growth in population, from 2.5 million in 1753 to 6.8 million in 1821 encouraged the growth of trades and trade unions. In the decade after the repeal of the anti-trade union Combination Acts in 1824, Dublin was regarded as the strongest centre of trade unionism in the United Kingdom (UK). Labour bodies were active too in other Irish cities and among agricultural workers. However their power reflected the failure of employers to advance from craft- based to factory-b ased production, and they were, as they realized themselves, living on borrowed time.

The political union of Ireland and Britain in 1800 was followed by a customs and monetary union in 1825. Unable to compete with the "workshop of the world", Irish proto-i ndustries sank into decay. Economic decline, the Great Famine of 1845–50, and high emigration reduced the population from 8.2 million to 4.4 million between 1841 and 1911. Only in the Belfast region did capitalist colonization generate a limited industrialization, in textiles, engineering, and shipbuilding. Elsewhere, the economy became massively dependent on agricultural exports to Britain.

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[9] Nor were there many overtly anarchist organisations, nor much of a conscious anarchist influence on Irish syndicalism. Anarchism had a slight impact on the small socialist groups in Ireland in the late 19th century, but Irish anarchists generally made their reputation abroad. See Fintan Lane, *The Origins of Modern Irish Socialism, 1881–1896*, Cork University Press, 1997, *passim*; and Máirtín Ó Catháin, "The only thing worth fighting for': Irish anarchist activism, 1871–1945" (unpublished paper).

[10] For an overview, see Emmet O'Connor, *A Labour History of Ireland, 1824–1960*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992.

When the south of Ireland won *de facto* independence as the Irish Free State in 1922, agriculture employed over half the labour force, agriculture, food, and drink accounted for 86 percent of exports, and 98 percent of exports went to the UK.[11] Economic differences between Ulster and the south underpinned religious and political differences. Whereas the southern provinces were overwhelmingly Catholic, Ulster was largely Protestant. From 1886, the nationalist demand for 'Home Rule', or self-government within the UK, provoked a counter-mobilization of Unionism in Ulster, and intermittent crises until the constitutional settlement of 1922.

The dimensions of the problems confronting Irish trade unionism may be gauged from the census of 1911. Of some 900,000 employees, 348,670 were classed as agricultural or general labourers, 170,749 were in domestic or related service, and 201,717 worked in textiles and dressmaking. Thus, over seven out of every nine employees were to be found in largely unorganised, subsistence-waged employment. Trade unions were located mainly in the shipbuilding and engineering trades (30,234 workers); construction (which included 49,445 craftsmen); the tiny skilled grades in textiles and clothing; and the constellation of butchers, bakers and candlestick-makers who held such a high profile in the pre- Larkinite ITUC.

Labour's weakness was exacerbated by the concentration of manufacture in Ulster, and its fraught political relationship with the rest of Ireland. Trade unions in Belfast's metal trades, for example, were not affiliated to Congress and scarcely a part of the Irish Labour movement.

Membership of Congress in 1911 was given as 50,000, and as this figure included trades councils—local committees of unions—the real level of membership was probably about 30,000.[12] The weakness of the craft unions gave unskilled workers, potentially, a great importance. Any union that managed to recruit a fraction of general workers would be in a position to dominate the ITUC.

Among general workers, those employed in transport and essential services, who operated at the hinges of commercial infrastructure where strikes would have an immediate and widespread effect, were most favourably placed to take successful industrial action. Transport was also a growth sector. The 1891 census noted 38,231 "persons engaged on railways, roads, rivers, seas, storage, conveyancing messages etc", and by 1911 the number had risen to 62,947. Here was the Achilles Heel of Irish employers. Between 1907 and 1912 transport accounted for an annual average of 12 percent of strikers and fewer than 4 percent of strike days in the UK. In Ireland, it accounted for 22 percent of strikes, 33 percent of strikers, and 33 percent of strike days over the same period.[13]

Transport unions played a leading role in each of three waves of militancy that transformed Irish Labour between 1889 and 1923. It is evident too that because of their own weakness, unions and workers in other sectors were willing to support transport workers when they gave a lead. The first of the three waves was powered by the extension of British 'new unionism' to Ireland between 1889 and 1891. The new unions organised unskilled workers and were more militant and more influenced by socialists than the craft unions, which held them in some suspicion.[14]

[11] Mary Daly, *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity, 1922–39*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992, 15.

[12] Donal Nevin (ed.), *Trade Union Century*, Cork: Mercier Press, 1994, 433–4.

[13] National Archives, UK, Ministry of Labour reports on strikes and lockouts, 1907– 12, LAB 34/7–12, LAB 34/25–30; hereafter this archive is referred to as NAUK; British Parliamentary Papers, Reports on Strikes and Lockouts, 1907–12, Cd 4254, Cd 4680, Cd 5325, Cd 5850, Cd 6472, Cd 7089; hereafter this archive is referred to as BPP. Figures for 1913 have been excluded as statistics for the lockout were not broken down by sector.

[14] See Henry Pelling, *A History of British Trade Unionism*, London: Penguin Books, 1974, 93–122.

Irish new unionism was pioneered by seafarers' and dockside unions, and similar in character to its British counterpart, except that Irish craftsmen were notably sympathetic to the fraternity of "trade and spade". Trades councils, for example, while dominated by artisans, sponsored May Day parades, encouraged Labour politics, and sought to speak for workers as a whole. During the Larkinite phase, transport workers would act as a bridge to other general workers. In the third wave, from 1917 to 1923, the ITGWU acquired a guiding influence and diffused a syndicalist character to unrest. The continuities in theme between Larkinism and the later syndicalism are remarkable, the more so as Larkin was in the US between 1914 and 1923.

Larkinism

What began, in January 1907, as a revival of new unionism, quickly evolved into Larkinism. Employers coined the term, as short hand for militancy, the cult of the agitator, and the sympathetic strike, and to distinguish these from what they called "*bona fide* trade u nionism". In the extensive literature on the topic, little of which is both substantial and scholarly, Larkinism is usually treated simply as the cult of Big Jim.[15] There was certainly a personality cult, which Jim would promote shamelessly. And Larkin did not try to express his ideas in any systematic way. Yet there was in Larkinism a method, a morality, a politics, and a strategy, all of which were syndicalist in some degree.

In line with NUDL policy, Larkin had set out to recruit dockers only and pursue improvements in conditions without strikes.[16] Within weeks, allied workers were seeking to join the union, and within months Larkin was being drawn into strikes by a combination of membership spontaneity and employer militancy. The Belfast dock strike of 1907 established his reputation. It was typical of Larkin that he would oppose strike action at first, but once convinced that conflict was unavoidable, he would mobilize all possible forces behind it and extend action to overstretch the employers and police. In June he escalated sectional disputes into a general strike in the port of Belfast. The mythology soon followed.

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[15] Larkin is treated *en passant* or anecdotally in a vast range of work. Nevin, *James Larkin*, while uneven in quality, is nevertheless a great compendium and includes a bibliography of some 500 books and articles referring to Larkin.

[16] For the NUDL see Eric Taplin, *The Dockers' Union: A Study of the National Union of Dock Labourers, 1889–1 922*, Leicester University Press, 1986.

Fig. 5. Jim Larkin speaking in Queen's Square, Belfast, 1907.

The sectarianism for which Belfast was notorious created deep divisions between workers, and the city's Catholic minority of some 25 percent formed a subaltern caste. It was said that Larkin led Catholics and Protestants in a parade on 12 July, when Protestants annually celebrated the victory of King William of Orange over a Catholic army in 1690, and that he incited the police to mutiny. In fact, he spent the 12th in Liverpool with his ailing mother, and had no direct part in the police action.

As with most myths, the facts embellished an essential truth, and Larkin did forge a brief, exultant unity across the religious divide, climaxing on 26 July when 100,000 people turned out for a trades council parade, which pointedly wound its way around the (Catholic) Falls and (Protestant) Shankill roads. The extraordinary atmosphere attracted a stream of visitors from the British left, and they were not disappointed. John Maclean wrote home: "Addressed strikers at night. Audience of thousands. Labourers mad to join trade unions".[17] Famously, on 24 July, the police buckled under the burden of their additional duties, assembled to demand better pay and conditions, and fraternized with the strikers. The government promptly rusticated 270 constables and rushed in 6,000 troops.[18] Generalized action and sympathetic action, whether in the form of blacking "tainted goods" or striking in support, became the standard fallback tactics in Larkin's method of industrial warfare.

Larkin underpinned his method with a morality, emphasizing repeatedly that workers' solidarity was a code of honour. Like many socialists of the *fin de siècle*, he was essentially a moralist. Arguably, as early as 1911 he was more interested in revolutionizing popular values than in the mundane work of organisation. As soon as he had placed the ITGWU on a stable footing, he founded a newspaper, the *Irish Worker*. The first issue, on 27 May 1911, sold about 5,000 copies. Within weeks, sales were above 20,000 per week. Over a period of fortyone months, Larkin edited 189 issues, and wrote the editorials and more than 400 articles.[19] He campaigned for temperance and played an active part in developing values such as sharing, fraternity, co- operation, and collectivism, as a counterc ulture to possessive individualism. In 1914 he told a meeting in Sheffield: "Get in the co- operative movement. Make it a real co- operative movement. Build up round your Trade Union, as we do in Dublin, every social movement, every part of your material side of life. Make your centre of Trade Unionism a centre of all your life and activities".[20] He had taken steps in this direction in the ITGWU's head office, Liberty Hall, which hosted classes in music and drama, and in renting Croydon Park House as a recreation centre where union members and their families could enjoy social and sports activities. As Larkin put it, "we make our family life focus around the union …".[21]

As early as the summer of 1907, the NUDL general secretary, James Sexton, had come to regard Larkin as a dangerous militant. Sexton saw no need for the NUDL to recruit other than dockers, or support generalized action. Larkin determined to follow his own course, and in December 1908

[17] B.J. Ripley and J. McHugh, *John Maclean*, Manchester University Press, 1989, 30.

[18] John Gray, *City in Revolt: James Larkin and the Belfast Dock Strike of 1907,* Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1985, is an excellent study of Larkin in Belfast.

[19] For studies of the paper see Donal Nevin, "The *Irish Worker*, 1911–1914", in Nevin, *James Larkin*, 152–8, and John Newsinger, "'A lamp to guide your feet': Jim Larkin, the *Irish Worker*, and the Dublin working class", *European History Quarterly*, 20, 1990, 63–99.

[20] *Daily Herald*, 16 July 1914.

[21] Quoted in Bob Holton, *British Syndicalism,1900–1914*, Pluto Press, London, 1976, 188.

he was suspended from his job.[22] With little alternative, he formed his own union, and confronted the great strategic question facing Irish Labour.

British unions—"the amalgamateds" as they were often called, as so many were originally styled "amalgamated society of …"—had been extending to Ireland since the 1840s, absorbing the smaller Irish societies. By 1900 some 75 percent of Irish trade unionists belonged to the amalgamateds and, despite the existence of the ITUC, they looked to Britain for leadership, example, and organisation.[23] Having launched an Irish union, Larkin made a virtue of necessity. The preamble to the ITGWU's first rule book asked: "Are we going to continue the policy of grafting ourselves on the English Trades Union movement, losing our identity as a nation in the great world of organised labour? We say emphatically, No. Ireland has politically reached her manhood".[24]

Between 1909 and 1914, Larkin moved ever closer to the Irish- Ireland movement associated with bodies like the Gaelic League and *Sinn Féin* ("Ourselves"), which sought the displacement of "anglicization" with a spirit of self-reliance. From this politics the ITGWU acquired a vision that would make it Ireland's premier union. Its success eventually delivered a terminal blow to the crippling policy of dependency on Britain and laid the basis of the modern Irish Labour movement. This would be Larkin's most enduring achievement, and there is overwhelming evidence that the politics of Larkinism was socialist republican. Yet Larkin's national sentiments would be obliterated as subsequent Labour leaders and literati such as Seán O'Casey and James Plunkett chose to commemorate him purely as a socialist.[25] Strategically, Larkin's thinking shifted incrementally from "new unionism" to industrial unionism. In 1909 his priority was to get the ITGWU accepted as a union and affiliated to the ITUC. In 1910 he attended the inaugural conference of the Industrial Syndicalist Education League (ISEL) at Manchester, and told delegates that "his union was formed on the industrial basis, and took in all workers in the transport industry. The transport industry held the key, for they could stop the whole of the rest of the trades".[26] In 1912, the year he became chairman of a largely Larkinite ITUC executive, he called for One Big Union. "Tomorrow", he declared on the eve of the 1912 annual congress, "We are going to advocate one society for Ireland for skilled and unskilled workers, so that when a skilled man is struck at, out comes the unskilled man, and when an unskilled worker is struck at, he will be supported by the skilled tradesman".[27] At the congress his proposal for an Irish Federation of Trades met with resistance from the British and some Irish craft unions and was defeated by 28–23 votes.

Larkin and Connolly had more success in persuading the 1912 congress to agree to form a Labour Party. Both combined a conception of electoral politics as "the echo of the [industrial] battle", with a belief in a "two arms strategy". In 1914 the ITUC became the ITUC and Labour Party. To politicize the unions and ensure their control over the politicians, the Congress and Party were one and the same, with no separate political machinery.[28] Here again, there was a

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[22] O'Connor, *James Larkin*, 19–22. For Sexton's view of events, see James Sexton, *Sir James Sexton, Agitator: The Life of the Dockers' MP, An Autobiography*, London: Faber and Faber, 1936.

[23] John W. Boyle, *The Irish Labour Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1988, 12, 5 6.

[24] O'Connor, *James Larkin*, 25.

[25] See "Seán O'Casey on Jim Larkin", in Nevin, *James Larkin*, 412–23; on Plunkett see D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, "Would it have been like this? James Plunkett and Strumpet City", *History Ireland*, winter 2004, 9.

[26] *Industrial Syndicalist*, December 1910, 30.

[27] O'Connor, *James Larkin*, 38.

[28] The name was changed again in 1918 to the Irish Labour Party and TUC. To minimize the alphabet soup, it will be referred to here throughout as the ITUC or Congress.

nationalist dimension, as prior to 1912 the ITUC had regularly urged affiliates to support the British Labour Party, an injunction applied only in Belfast.

Larkinism was, of course, driven also by employers. What little has been written on employer policy in Ireland before the 1960s has focused on economics rather than industrial relations.[29] But what evidence we have points consistently to the fact that if employers were prepared to accept craft unions, they were hostile to the unionization of unskilled workers; regarded Larkinism, sympathetic strikes, and syndicalism as synonymous; and saw Larkin as the instigator of syndicalist doctrines which endangered the basis of the economy itself.

The distinction between skilled and unskilled was most acute in Ireland's industrial capital. The proportion of unionized men in the metal trades in Belfast in 1900 exceeded the UK average. Unlike their British colleagues, Belfast engineering employers made no attempt to break trade unions in the 1860s and 1870s. As early as 1872 the Belfast Employers' Association had negotiated directly with unions on wages and conditions. Between 1860 and 1900, skilled rates in the city rose faster than in Britain, and due to the scarcity of artisans and abundance of labourers, the differential between skilled and unskilled wages in Belfast exceeded the UK average, sometimes reaching a ratio of 3:1.[30]

However the coal heavers who joined the NUDL in 1907 were treated quite differently. They were dismissed and, according to Gray: their employer "stated very clearly the prevailing view of Belfast's employers when he said, 'the situation at issue had no reference to wages whatsoever; it was merely as to whether the dockers should associate themselves with a union which he considered should not embrace such a class of employment'".[31]

Employers were less well organised in the south of Ireland, but they responded to Larkinism in a similar fashion. Federations, created expressly to combat strikes, were formed in Cork in 1909 and Galway in 1911. Within weeks of the ITGWU forming a branch in Wexford in 1911, the town's major employers gave notice that no member of the union would be employed and locked out 700 men.[32] The September 1911 rail strike popularized the idea of employer federation. The dispute originated in the dismissal of two porters at Kingsbridge (now Heuston) station, Dublin, for refusing to handle "tainted goods". As spontaneous action erupted along the railway, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants attempted to assert its authority by calling a national strike on 21 September. The decision drew a torrent of criticism in the media, which railed against "foreign" ideas in Irish industrial relations, and alarmed employers. Dublin Chamber of Commerce met in emergency session and urged employers to organise against what one employer termed "not a strike in the ordinary sense ... but the beginning of a social war".[33]

Within weeks, local employers' federations were being formed throughout the country. William Martin Murphy, chairman of the Dublin United Tramways Company, owner of the *Irish Independent* newspaper, vice p resident of the Dublin Chamber, and president in 1913–14, and Dublin's puissant capitalist, was impressed with the railway directors' handling of the crisis.

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[29] See for example T.V. Murphy and W.K. Roche, *Irish Industrial Relations in Practice*, Dublin: Oak Tree Press, 1994; and Patrick Gunnigle, Gerard McMahon, and Gerard Fitzgerald, *Industrial Relations in Ireland: Theory and Practice*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1999.

[30] See Boyd Black, "Re-assessing Irish Industrial Relations and Labour History: the north -east of Ireland up to 1921", *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations*, 14, 2002, 45–85.

[31] Gray, *City in Revolt*, 59.

[32] Michael Enright, *Men of Iron: Wexford Foundry Disputes, 1890 and 1911*, Wexford: Wexford Council of Trade Unions, 1987, 18–19.

[33] Thomas J. Morrissey, *William Martin Murphy*, Dundalk: History Association of Ireland, 1997, 44–6.

The largest company, the Great Southern and Western, locked out 1,600 workers by closing the railway workshops and imported labour from England. When the strike collapsed on 4 October 1911, the Great Southern refused to re-employ 10 percent of the strikers, and re-engaged others at reduced rates; men recruited during the strike were retained, and those who had stayed at work were rewarded with bonuses. So pleased were the directors with crushing Larkinism, that they marked the occasion with the gift of a clock to each of 121 station masters.[34]

The 1913 Dublin Lockout

To the dismay of other employers, the defeat of the railwaymen did not arrest the contemporary strike wave or restrain the use of sympathetic action. The employers blamed Larkin, but they also blamed the Liberal government—for introducing the Trades Disputes Act 1906 and the National Insurance Act 1911, and for its "supineness" towards trade unions—and its minions in the administration in Dublin Castle.[35] After the police mutiny in Belfast in 1907, the authorities were nervous about confronting Larkin. Police unrest in Unionist Ulster was bad enough: a mutiny in nationalist Dublin was not to be risked. That in turn made Dublin employers fearful of emulating their provincial colleagues and the railway companies in using strike-breakers.

Murphy however, was determined never to recognize Larkin's union. He made no secret of the fact that his quarrel with Liberty Hall was not about wages and conditions. Business, he told his colleagues, could not survive the "system known as 'syndicalism' or 'sympathetic strikes' ".[36] There was a personal dimension to the antagonism, and more so for Murphy than Larkin. If the *Irish Worker* had vilified Murphy repeatedly as the epitome of sweating capitalism, *ad hominem* abuse was Larkin's way: it served his compulsion to put a face on the enemy. He had no ulterior motive in challenging Murphy. He had always believed that the financial future of the ITGWU depended on pushing into steady employment areas such as the railway and Murphy's splendid tramway system. On the other hand, when Murphy called Larkin a "mean thief" and expressed surprise that artisans should associate with "scum like Larkin and his followers", he was not playing to the gallery.[37]

Murphy prepared his ground well. One week before the ITGWU struck the trams, he visited Dublin Castle and emerged with firm assurances of adequate protection in the event of trouble. On 3 September he chaired a meeting of 404 employers, who agreed to dismiss all workers who would not sign a document obliging them to carry out their employers' instructions and in no way support the ITGWU. It was expected that, as in the rail strike, union opposition would crumble quickly. By the end of September, a strike of perhaps 340 men had led to a lockout of over 20,000 workers in a city of 300,000 people.

In the public memory, the lockout is synonymous with Larkinism, and its raw class solidarity understood as a by-product of Dublin's appalling social conditions.[38] Yet Larkinism began in Belfast, where, in 1903, 1 percent of families lived in one room tenements, compared with

[34] Irish Railway Record Society Archive, Dublin, Great Southern and Western Railway, files 1019, 1069. I am obliged to Conor McCabe for these references.

[35] Arnold Wright, *Disturbed Dublin: The Story of the Great Strike of 1913–14, With a Description of the Industries of the Irish Capital*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1914, 94.

[36] Morrissey, *William Martin Murphy*, 56–7.

[37] O'Connor, *James Larkin*, 42.

[38] For example, Curriculum Development Unit, *Dublin 1913: A Divided City*, O'Brien Educational, Dublin, 1984,

26 percent in Glasgow, and 35 percent in Dublin.[39] Protagonists had no doubt that syndicalism lurked at the heart of the lockout. The Board of Trade conciliator, George Askwith, recalled that while British strikes of the period were "chiefly based upon economic issues, the serious riots in Dublin, although founded on poverty, low wages and bad conditions, included the determination to establish the transport workers' union as 'the one big union' in Ireland and put into practice the doctrines of syndicalism".[40]

Wright, the employers' historian of the conflict, represented his patrons as defending the protocols of responsible labour-management against the impossible Mr Larkin and his reckless syndicalist belief in the sympathetic strike, and stressed the influence of the government's failure to contain industrial unrest in England.[41] More surprisingly perhaps, it is easy to find Labour voices in agreement with Askwith. W.P. Ryan, assistant editor of the *Daily Herald*, the voice of the "rebels" on the British left, also placed syndicalism at the kernel of the dispute, adding that the employers "were quite correct from their point of view".[42] The first academic history of Irish labour, written in 1925, offered a similar analysis.[43]

Resistance to the lockout finally crumbled in January 1914. The ITGWU emerged from the ordeal more aggressively national. There were various reasons for the shift in emphasis. Since the strike wave of 1911, Larkinism had begun to differentiate nationalists on the social question. Supporters of the constitutional nationalist Home Rule party tended to be hostile, while those in the leading republican organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), were more sympathetic.

The lockout itself generated the first intellectual explorations in socialist republicanism outside of Connolly's writing. P.H. Pearse, who would mastermind the Easter Rising, wrote, in a polemic against the employers: "A free Ireland would not, could not, have hunger in her fertile vales and squalor in her cities ..." As Yeates has noted, the contention that a republic would be socially inclusive mirrored Connolly's line that only under socialism would Ireland be free, and "the practical conclusions for future political action were almost identical".[44] Ryan penned the pamphlet *The Labour Revolt and Larkinism: the Later Irish Pioneers and the Co-operative Commonwealth* (1913) which envisaged Larkinism, the co-operative movement, and politico-cultural forces like *Sinn Féin* and the Gaelic League remaking the Gaelic communism romanticized by Connolly in *Labour in Irish History.*

a text for secondary schools, said little about trade u nionism and much about the city's social divisions. The best history of the lockout is Pádraig Yeates, *Lockout: Dublin 1913*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2000, 221.

[39] W. Coe, "The Economic History of the Engineering Industry in the North of Ireland", Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, Belfast, 1961, 325–62. This is not to deny that Belfast had its poor housing and serious public health problems. According to the Northern Whig, 26 January 1907, the Public Health Committee estimated that 3,000 dwellings in the city had no water closets.

[40] Quoted in John Newsinger, *Rebel City: Larkin, Connolly, and the Dublin Labour Movement*, London: Merlin Press, 2004, 16.

[41] Wright, 29, 94.

[42] W. Ryan, "The struggle of 1913", in Workers' Union of Ireland, *1913: Jim Larkin and the Dublin Lock Out,* Dublin: Workers' Union of Ireland, 1964, 7.

[43] J.D. Clarkson, *Labour and Nationalism in Ireland*, Ams Press, New York, first ed. New York, 1926, 241–4.

[44] Yeates, 221.

The Citizen's Army and the Easter Rising

At a personal level, Larkin wanted a distraction from the burden of running a bankrupt union, and Ireland was in the throes of the third Home Rule crisis. Though usually associated with Connolly, it was Larkin who led the ITGWU in a more openly republican direction. The Citizen Army, created in November 1913 to protect workers from the police, was transformed from a picket-militia into a pocket army.[45] When the government announced its intention to accommodate Unionists by partitioning Ireland, Larkin was beside himself with anger.

Connolly's observation that partition would mean "a carnival of reaction both North and South" has often been treated as a unique prophetic insight, but it was exceptional only in its eloquence. The bulk of Labour activists, in Britain and Ireland, regarded Unionism as politically organised sectarianism, and believed that dividing Ireland along religious lines would create two reactionary, confessional states. Congress sponsored an anti-partition meeting on 5 April 1914 and condemned partition at its annual conference in June by 84–2 votes, with eight delegates unrecorded: twenty delegates from Ulster, and four from Britain, attended the Congress.[46]

The Ulstermen may not have spoken for the majority of their members, but they probably reflected the views of northern Labour activists, most of who were not nationalists, but were fearful of being locked into a sectarian statelet. Each of the previous Home Rule crises, in 1886 and 1893, had seen Catholics forced from their jobs in Belfast. During the third crisis, in 1912, 3,000 workers were victimized by loyalists. On this occasion, men of all religions were targeted, and about 600 were Protestant, expelled for their Labour or Liberal, and therefore anti-partitionist, sympathies.[47] Larkin's response to the World War was exactly the same as Connolly's. Even before events in the Balkans engulfed Europe, the *Irish Worker* called on "every man who believed in Ireland as a nation to act now. England's need, our opportunity. The men are ready. The guns must be got, and at once". On the outbreak of war, Larkin had his boyhood friend, syndicalist Fred Bower, smuggle a few guns from Liverpool.[48]

In October 1914, under the guise of a fund-raising trip, Larkin abandoned the stricken ITGWU for a new career as a globe-trotting, freelance agitator. He remained the ITGWU's titular general secretary. Connolly became acting general secretary of the union, commandant of the Citizen Army, and editor of the *Irish Worker*. Labour generally was adversely affected by the lockout, and the ITGWU became increasingly isolated within the trade union movement. Its membership had now fallen from some 20,000 on the eve of the lockout to about 5,000. Within the union executive there was mounting unease about Connolly's repeated calls for an insurrection, and it came close to repudiating the Citizen Army on the eve of Easter Week, 1916.

Like the government, Connolly believed the IRB would never seize the moment, until January 1916, when he was made privy to their plans. The Rising was to have German military aid, and coincide with the German offensive at Verdun. Though Connolly used Liberty Hall as a base for preparations, he made no effort to involve the union in the conspiracy, which, naturally, had to be secret. Liberty Hall was nonetheless shelled by the British during the week-long insurrection,

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[45] See Donal Nevin, "The Irish Citizen Army, 1913–16", in Nevin, *James Larkin*, 257–65.

[46] Arthur Mitchell, *Labour in Irish Politics, 1890–1930: The Irish Labour Movement in an Age of Revolution*, Dublin: Irish University Press, 1974, 45.

[47] Black, 60.

[48] Nevin, "The Irish Citizen Army", 260; Fred Bower, *Rolling Stonemason: An Autobiography*, Jonathon Cape, London, 1936, 182.

and the ITGWU was widely regarded as a participant. Initially, public opinion seemed hostile to the rebels who had brought war to the streets of Dublin.[49] Anxious about employer demands that Labour be held legally responsible for the damage to property, the ITUC dissociated itself from the insurgents in its annual report for 1916. It seemed that Larkinism was as dead as Connolly himself.[50]

The 'red flag times'

Within three years of the Rising, Labour was on the march again, militant, radical, and more influenced by syndicalism than ever before. The primary cause of this change of fortune was the World War. Secondary factors were the climate of class struggle internationally and the political revolution at home. The executions and arrests that followed the Easter Rising swung public opinion away from the Home Rulers to the separatists, who took control of *Sinn Féin* in 1917, and then won seventy three of Ireland's 105 seats in the UK parliament in the general election of December 1918.

On 21 January 1919, *Sinn Féin* MPs constituted themselves as *Dáil Éireann* (the Assembly of Ireland), declared Ireland a republic, and set about building a counter-state to the colonial administration. That same day, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) began the War of Independence with an attack on a police escort. Britain tried to suppress both the *Dáil* government and the IRA, until a truce was accepted in July 1921. The majority of *Sinn Féin* agreed to the Anglo-Irish treaty of 6 December 1921, which made the south of Ireland a self-governing dominion of the empire, and left most of Ulster within the UK. The majority of the IRA tried to sustain the struggle for total independence, until crushed in the Civil War of 1922–1923.

For workers on the home front, the world war was one of two halves. Meeting the needs of Britain's war economy brought great prosperity to Irish employers.[51] Employees were less fortunate. Wages failed to match inflation from 1914 to 1916, causing hardship and accusations of profiteering against the propertied classes. But if the first half of the war stored up social grievances, production demands and the growing manpower shortage after 1916 provided the means of redress. The preconditions of wage improvement materialized in two ways: through government intervention to increase pay in war-related industries, and, later, through the all-round economic improvement. After the war, the release of "pent-up" consumer demand generated a brief economic boom. Wages generally rose faster than prices from 1916, overtaking pre-war levels by 1919–20, until the economy hit a disastrous slump in 1920–21. Given the nature of capitalism, the money was only for those who could get it.

Trade unionism exploded in all directions; from under 100,000 in 1916, membership affiliated to Congress reached 225,000 in 1920. Trades councils multiplied, to fifteen by 1918 and forty six by 1921.[52] Symbolic of the new values was their titular rejection of "trades and labour" in favour of "workers' council".

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[49] C. Desmond Greaves, *The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union: The Formative Years, 1909–23*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1982, 157–67.

[50] O'Connor, *A Labour History of Ireland*, 93.

[51] See L.M. Cullen, *An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660*, London: B.T. Batsford, Ltd, 1987, 171–72; David Johnson, *The Interwar Economy in Ireland*, Dublin: Irish Economic and Social History Society, 1985, 3–5.

[52] University of Ulster, Magee College (UUMC), ITUC, Annual Reports, 1916–21.

State intervention remained a key determinant of wage movements for the first three years of the war. Though the initial effect of statutory control was to freeze wages, from 1915 onwards intervention became a means of securing war bonuses or minimum rates. Importance to the war effort and good organisation were therefore essential for successful militancy. Ireland's piecemeal integration into the war economy created a time-lag in wage movements between employment sectors.[53]

"Old sectors", i.e. those with a history of trade unionism, were the first to recoup lost ground. Seamen and dockers won pay advances in 1915. The government took control of the shipyards and railways in 1916, making provision for the payment of war bonuses. Aerodrome and other military construction, together with the repair of Dublin's shelltorn city centre, revived the building line in 1917–18. Building became particularly strike-prone after mid 1918. Almost 19 percent of all strikers between 1914 and 1921 were building workers.[54] The introduction of statutory minimum rates in agriculture in 1917 finally enabled "new sectors" to join the wages movement over the next two years.

Government regulation and the interventionist momentum persisted into the post-war era, partly in response to fears of class conflict. The recommendations of the Whitley committee, appointed to investigate wartime industrial unrest in Britain, led to the Trade Boards Act (1918). An Irish Department of the British Ministry of Labour was set up in July 1919, and by August 1920 there were nineteen trade boards covering 148,000 employees, the bulk of them in Ulster's textile and clothing industries.[55]

The war mobilized industry without restructuring the workforce. Ulster was the main beneficiary. Textiles, clothing, engineering, and shipbuilding were soon harnessed to military needs, but no sizable munitions sector developed in Ulster, while Unionist and British employer determination to freeze nationalist Ireland out of lucrative war contracts kept the south de-industrialized. The few munitions factories distributed to mollify nationalist outrage did not commence production until 1917, and employed a mere 2,169 persons by the armistice.[56]

As a result, southern wage movements were compelled to be the cause as much as the consequence of state intervention. This, together with the more primitive condition of industrial relations in which they operated, gave them a more militant character, and strikes lit the path of trade unionism to new sectors and new regions. Strike activity increased steadily from 1915 to the armistice. The level of conflict declined in 1919 as rising unemployment yielded quickly to an economic boom, but militancy reached new heights in 1920, before receding sharply with the onset of the slump and the gradual fall in the cost of living towards the end of that year.

For their impact on the character of trade unionism, the most important state interventions were those on the railway and in agriculture. Under severe rank and file pressure, the London-based National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) sanctioned a national strike in Ireland in December 1916. As private interests would not meet the pay demand, the government stepped in to keep

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[53] For a more detailed account of the wages movement, see Emmet O'Connor, *Syndicalism in Ireland, 1917–23*, Cork University Press, 1988, 20–53.

[54] NAUK, Ministry of Labour annual reports on strikes and lockouts 1914–21, LAB 34/14–20, 34/32–39. See also David Fitzpatrick, "Strikes in Ireland, 1914–21", *Saothar*, 6, 1980, 26–39, for a fine statistical analysis.

[55] See Brendan Mark Browne, "Trade Boards in Northern Ireland, 1909–45", Ph.D. diss., Queen's University Belfast, 1989, 146–57, 340.

[56] A further 8,000 or so Irish worked in munitions in Britain. See Imperial War Museum, London, French MSS, memorandum from Sir Thomas Stafford and Sir Frank Brooke to the Viceroy's advisory council, 20 November 1918, 75/46/12; Fitzpatrick, 29–34.

the war effort running smoothly, took control of Ireland's thirty two railway companies, and awarded a substantial war bonus. Over the next nine months the NUR's Irish affiliation rocketed from 5,000 to 17,000 members.[57] It was a victory for the rank and file over the union's London executive, as well as for the union over the railway companies. In 1917 NUR men launched the monthly journal *New Way* and developed the most articulate rank and file movement in Ireland during these years.

As food supplies worsened alarmingly in the winter of 1916/17, the government introduced tillage orders under the Corn Production Act, obliging farmers to bring at least 10 percent of their arable land under the plough in 1917, and a further 5 percent in 1918. Tillage being labour intensive, the Act gave farm workers a scarcity value. An Agricultural Wages Board was established in September 1917 to determine compulsory minimum pay and conditions. The food supply crisis gave Congress a social purpose and widened the ambit of industrial struggle. Workers, especially NUR men, responded to profiteering by setting up consumer co-operatives which, though limited in scale, and mostly of brief duration, were of demonstrative importance for the inchoate anti-capitalist sentiment welling up in popular consciousness. As unrest spread, the coincidence of pay claims from so many disparate occupations turned wage movements into 'the wages movement'.

Trends towards general action first cohered in Dublin in October 1917 when strike notices affecting 2,000–3,000 employees were pending. Murphy's *Irish Independent* feared another 1913. Dublin's trades council offered to co-ordinate demands and promote the convening of unions in industrial groups. The ITGWU especially, responded to the new opportunities. Re-organised in 1917, the union had mushroomed to 120,000 members by 1920, half of them in agriculture.[58]

In what ways was Labour syndicalist? There were still no card carrying syndicalists in Ireland, and the term was rarely used, though "industrial unionism", "OBU" (One Big Union), "co-operative commonwealth", and "workers' republic" were coming into common currency. The leadership of Congress, in which O'Brien was central, was happy to be radical only as long as it led to trade union growth. Again, it is in the character of Labour activity and policy, in the revival of Larkinism and the adoption of Connolly's industrial unionism, that the syndicalist footprint becomes evident.

Tactically, there was a spontaneous resurgence of Larkinite methods of sympathetic action. In some cases this extended generalized action. Between 1917 and 1920 there were eighteen local general strikes, mainly in small towns where almost all workers had joined the ITGWU and put forward common wage demands. During these strikes the town was usually taken over by the strike committee, which controlled business and transport through a system of permits. The permits were a means of getting everyone—including employers—to accept the authority of the union as well as enforcing solidarity.

Workplace seizures—or *soviets* as they were called—almost all involving the ITGWU, emerged from November 1918 onwards, substantially as strike tactics but indicating too a political ambition. The most extensive seizure, that of thirteen Limerick creameries in 1920, was a well planned affair directed by three socialist ITGWU officials. On 16 May a red flag was hoisted over the central creamery at Knocklong and a banner proclaimed: "We make butter, not profits. Knocklong

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[57] Philip Bagwell, *The Railwaymen: The History of the National Union of Railwaymen*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1963, 356–7.

[58] For ITGWU activities see especially Greaves, 168ff.

Creamery Soviet". The latest ITGWU paper, the *Watchword of Labour*, compared the creamery *soviets* with the takeover of the FIAT car works in Turin in 1920, though it conceded that Turin represented "an advance on Knocklong".[59] Strikes, especially in rural areas, were also more likely to accompanied by sabotage or violence during these years.

Syndicalism was evident too in efforts to develop a working class counter-culture, through co-operatives, May Day parades, festivals (*aeríochtaí*), and labour newspapers. Liberty Hall tried to revive Larkin's ideas on alternative morality. Its annual report for 1919 directed members to conceive of the union "as a social centre, round which they can build every activity of their existence, and which, wisely used, can be made to remedy all their grievances". In 1919 trade unions funded the James Connolly Labour College, which enrolled over 200 students in classes in history, economics, and public administration. An appeal for lecturers in the *Watchword of Labour* advised that "the working class outlook" was an essential requirement "for unless ye become as proletarians ye cannot enter the Workers' Republic". The College flourished up to November 1920, when it was raided and ransacked by the British military.[60]

One measure of the greater profile of workers at this time is Catholic Church's heightened interest in the social question. The Catholic publication, the *Irish Messenger*, published twenty eight pamphlets on the Church and labour in 1918, compared with five in 1913. There was even, *mirabile dictu*, an academic study of labour, George O'Brien's *Labour Organisation* (1921). Another book on labour from an Irish academic would not appear until 1973!

The syndicalist imprint was particularly marked on Labour strategy. By 1918 the ITGWU was facing an entirely novel problem for an Irish union: how to make best advantage of the tens of thousands of workers flooding into the union. It turned to Connolly's *Socialism Made Easy* for an answer. Part II of this beautifully clear pamphlet gave Liberty Hall a project to modernize the entire movement. On 1 July 1918, the ITGWU issued *The Lines of Progress*, a pamphlet intended to "advance Connolly's OBU idea" in order to develop "a scientific solution to the Labour question". "With this machine [the OBU] in their possession", it promised, "the workers of Ireland can break all their chains with ease and from the mere rallying cry of political parties turn Freedom into a glorious reality".[61] In 1921 the ITGWU published the first Irish edition of *Socialism Made Easy* together with other Connolly writings on industrial unionism in the pamphlet *The Axe to the Root*. Industrial unionism was also promoted in the NUR's *New Way*.[62]

The impact of change was unmistakeable at the 1918 annual ITUC: 240 delegates attended, compared with ninety nine the previous year. O'Brien's presidential address strained to strike a historic note, eulogizing Connolly and his influence on "the great Russian Revolution". The delegates passed unanimously a motion of support for the Bolsheviks, peace in Europe, and self-determination for all peoples, and the Congress took as its objective the promotion of working class organisation socially, industrially, and politically in co-operatives, trade unions, and a political party. At a special conference in November 1918, Congress changed its name to the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, and adopted a socialist programme, demanding collective ownership of wealth and democratic management of production.

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[59] See D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, "The Munster *soviet* creameries", *Saotharlann Staire Éireann*, 1, 1981, 36–9.

[60] Emmet O'Connor, " 'True Bolsheviks?': The rise and fall of the Socialist Party of Ireland, 1917–21", in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds.), *Ireland in Transition, 1867–1921*, London: Routledge, London, 2004, 213.

[61] O'Connor, *Syndicalism in Ireland*, 62–3.

[62] See Conor McCabe, The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and the National Union of Railwaymen in Ireland, 1911–1923", Ph.D. diss., University of Ulster, 2006.

In February 1919, a special congress met to co-ordinate a "Proposed United National Wages and Hours Movement", and in August the ITUC voted to transform itself into a single Irish Workers' Union.

Structured in ten industrial sectors, the union, through its political and industrial activities, aimed to realize "the taking over control of industry by the organised working class".[63] Ultimately, Congress failed to surmount sectionalism and give effect to the "Wages and Hours Movement" or the Irish Workers' Union. It was an opportunity wasted, as unions would never be as united again for another twenty years.

Setbacks in these heady times seemed inconsequential, as Labour looked certain to become a major player in the new Ireland. No one knew what economic disasters lay around the corner. But it is not being wise after the event to criticize Labour for failing to take better advantage of the national revolution. Despite Connolly and Larkin, Labour never rid itself of the notion—deeply embedded in its psyche during the height of anglicization—that socialism and nationalism were dichotomous. While willing to go with the flow of popular sentiment, it was reluctant to lead opinion on the national question, or bargain with nationalists.

The independence struggle radicalized Labour, but equally, Labour squandered its chances to demand more of it. Congress's main interventions came in three general strikes. On 23 April 1918, workers struck against the extension of conscription to Ireland.[64] The success of Ireland's first general strike made Labour seem a power in the land. The next three months witnessed a tremendous upsurge of union membership. A second national strike followed on 1 May 1919 "for international proletarian solidarity and self-determination for all peoples".

Labour's finest hour came on 12 April 1920, when it called an immediate indefinite general strike for the release of political prisoners on hunger strike. Co-ordinated by workers' councils, many of which assumed a "soviet" style command of local government for the occasion, the stoppage was a spectacular demonstration of Labour discipline. Fearing the infection of the *Sinn Féin* struggle with "Bolshevism", the authorities released the prisoners after two days. Though prompted by a national issue, the strike uncovered the social revolutionary dynamic bubbling at the base of the movement. As the *Manchester Guardian* remarked on 20 April: "The direction of affairs passed during the strike to these [workers'] councils, which were formed not on a local but on a class basis...It is no exaggeration to trace a flavour of proletarian dictatorship about some aspects of the strike".

There were also three major rank-and-file initiatives. In April 1919, the Limerick trades council co-ordinated a nine-day general strike "against British militarism".[65] The Irish Automobile Drivers' and Mechanics' Union struck in November in protest at the introduction of compulsory permits for vehicle drivers; a move by the authorities designed to assist the monitoring of transport. Dockers, and then railwaymen, commenced a seven month selective stoppage in May 1920, refusing to handle or convey British munitions.[66] The only concession that Labour wanted—and received—from *Sinn Féin* was the neutrality of the IRA towards direct action in furtherance of the

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[63] UUMC, ITUC, Annual Reports, 1918–19.

[64] The most detailed account of Labour involvement in the anti-conscription campaign is J. Anthony Gaughan, *Thomas Johnson*, Dublin: Kingdom Books, 1980, 86–122.

[65] See Liam Cahill, *Forgotten Revolution: The Limerick Soviet, 1919, A Threat to British Power in Ireland*, Dublin: O'Brien Press, 1990.

[66] Charles Townshend, "The Irish Railway Strike of 1920: industrial action and civil resistance in the struggle for independence", *Irish Historical Studies*, XXI, 1979, 83.

wages movement. It was assumed that once the national revolution was completed, class politics would come into its own.

Syndicalism falters

Even as the revolution approached its climax, syndicalism started to falter in the slump. Massive expansion of the world's productive capacity during World War I, followed by a further increase in output to meet the first demands of a peace-time market, led to a crisis of overproduction in the autumn of 1920. Food prices were the first to tumble, causing a severe depression in agriculture. During 1921, Irish manufacturing trade was almost halved. By December, over 26 percent of workers were idle. Rising unemployment depressed consumer demand, sending the economy tail spinning into long-term recession. Employers clamoured for the restoration of pre-war wage levels. In Britain, wages were getting "back to normal" following the collapse of the Triple Alliance of railwaymen's, miners', and transport unions on "Black Friday". A similar pattern was anticipated in Ireland, with the railwaymen providing the initial sacrifice following government decontrol of the railways on 14 August 1921. Largely fulfilled in Northern Ireland, employer expectations were frustrated in the south by the effect with which militancy could be deployed in the near anarchic conditions obtaining up to 1923.[67]

The 1921 congress pledged to "hold the harvest" of wage gains, and urged the formation of inter-union committees on a local and industrial basis to co-ordinate resistance to wage cuts. Speaker after speaker affirmed their conviction in industrial unionism as a strategic riposte to the employers' counter-attack, and declared that they would have no "Black Fridays" in Ireland. But when it came to the crunch, it became a *sauve qui peut*. Irish unions, especially the ITGWU, exploited the readiness of the amalgamateds to accept wage cuts in line with the more rapidly falling pay rates in Britain.

By 1922, a deep and persistent Anglophobia had crept into interunion rivalry, aggravated by the inaction of British Labour in the face of sectarian disturbances in Ulster and its stubborn intention to remain in post-colonial Ireland. Nor was the squabbling confined to Anglo-Irish friction. Inter-union competition for a dwindling pool of members soured industrial unionism: the OBU, the cynics said, meant "O'Brien's Union". Militancy in the absence of effecting policing enabled workers to put up a dogged fight, and the ITGWU had the best record of any union in this respect: remarkably, it still held 100,000 members in 1922, most with peak wage rates.

But Labour went down, section by section, slowly but surely succumbing to the wage-cutting offensive. The last phase of the industrial war was the "autumn crisis" of 1923, when about 20,000 workers took strike action or were locked out. By December 1923 it was all over. General unions were in severe decline, and trade unionism in agriculture was near collapse. Congress membership had fallen to 175,000 by 1924, and withered to 92,000 by 1929.

Trade unions were not just defeated, they were discredited. In many instances, workers had pressed for tougher action, and then blamed the inevitable retreat on leadership betrayal. Over eighty *soviets* were declared in 1922, for example, but the ITGWU let them be crushed by the Free State army with scarcely a protest. To have pledged so much and delivered so little led to disillusionment with syndicalism and all that went with the "red flag times".

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[67] For class conflict, 1921–3, see O'Connor, *Syndicalism in Ireland*, 96–139.

In the cruellest twist of fate, the debacle was compounded by Larkin. Psychologically, Larkin never recovered from the 1913 lockout, and it led his egotism to degenerate into egomania. After his return to Ireland in April 1923, he set about restoring his old command of what he regarded as 'his' union. Neither O'Brien nor the ITGWU executive were willing to stomach his domineering ways, and with Big Jim it was a case of "rule or ruin". In June, with the ITGWU steeling itself for the employers' "big push", he attacked the union executive and, making little effort to rationalize his action ideologically, launched a campaign of vilification against the ITGWU and Congress leadership that would fester for fifty years.[68]

The Labour Party too paid a price. Its impressive 21 percent of the vote in June 1922—its first general election—was grounded on the post-1917 advance of trade unionism. Over the next twelve months the parliamentary party failed to make itself relevant to the industrial war. The general election of August 1923 saw its vote plummet to 11 percent. Coincidentally, the party's vote would average 11 percent over the rest of the century. While Labour had known defeat and disillusion before, the depth and scale of the 1923 catastrophe was unique.

What survived of revolutionism in the Labour movement followed Larkin into communism. The Bolsheviks had been very popular in Ireland initially, not least for their opposition to the world war and support for national self-determination. Communism obviously influenced trade unionists in the declaration of *soviets*, and the ITUC's foreign policy was markedly pro-Soviet up to 1922. There was also a Bolshevik faction in the Socialist Party of Ireland (SPI), which O'Brien revived in 1917. Formed in 1909, the SPI had been led by Connolly from 1910, and it served O'Brien's purpose to take up his hero's mantle.[69]

In another reflection of Labour's pre-occupation with trade unionism at this time, the SPI's potential was severely neglected. Roddy Connolly, son of James, seized control of the party in 1921 and affiliated it to the Communist International, or Comintern, as the Communist Party of Ireland.[70] Larkin had the communists dissolve the party in 1924 in favour of his own group, the Irish Worker League. He remained more a syndicalist than a Leninist, but he never had much interest in theory in any case, and saw communism as the old class struggle in an apparently more effective format. The Comintern had high hopes of Larkin, and prospects looked good.

When Peter Larkin launched the Workers' Union of Ireland in June 1924—during his brother's absence in Russia—16,000 workers, two thirds of ITGWU members in Dublin, defected to the union. There was now a defined communist constituency in Dublin. The Irish Worker League, with some 500 supporters, affiliated to the Comintern. The Workers' Union joined the Red International of Labour Unions, the Profintern. A further 5,000 workers were affiliated to the "all-red" Dublin trades council—so called for its sympathy with the Bolsheviks—and which, in these suicidally fractious times stood in opposition to the ITGWU-led Dublin Workers' Council.

The Comintern deemed the 14,000 strong post-Civil War IRA to be another propitious field. There were certainly possibilities of harnessing the foot soldiers of the defeated Labour and republican movements into a new radical force. But Larkin's personality problems prevented him from making anything of the material at his disposal, and he was powerful enough, in Dublin and Moscow, to ensure that if little could be done with him, nothing would be done without

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[68] For Larkin's motivation in splitting the ITGWU and his subsequent career see Emmet O'Connor, *Reds and the Green: Ireland, Russia, and the Communist Internationals, 1919–43*, University College, Dublin Press, 2004, 76–139.

[69] O'Connor, 'True Bolsheviks?'

[70] The only biography of Roddy Connolly is Charlie McGuire, *Roddy Connolly and the Struggle for Socialism in Ireland*, Cork University Press, 2008.

him. Extraordinary wrangles between himself and Moscow culminated in a break with the Comintern and Profintern in 1929. He eventually sought a measure of rehabilitation in the mainstream Labour movement. At a personal level, his retreat from Moscow was timely. Pope Pius XI appealed for a vigorous anti-communism in 1930, and the Irish Catholic clergy responded fiercely, crippling the Comintern's efforts to re-build a party in Ireland. The window of opportunity between the defeat of syndicalism and the re-emergence of a conservative social consensus had closed.

An industrial unionist postscript

Syndicalism was dead, and its orphan, Irish Labour, inherited some awkward anomalies from the failure to complete the industrial unionist project and from the 1920–22 constitutional settlement. The amalgamateds continued to represent about 25 percent of trade unionists in the Free State, and over 80 percent in Northern Ireland. The ITUC remained an all-Ireland body, but scarcely played any role in the North up to the 1940s. The multiplicity of unions and the amalgamateds remained a serious problem, weakening the labour movement.

Unions enjoyed a recovery in the 1930s. The *Sinn Féin* split over the Anglo-Irish treaty had led the majority faction to re-form as *Cumann na nGaedheal* ("the Irish Party"). Another split in 1926 saw moderates breakaway from the rump of *Sinn Féin* to launch *Fianna Fáil* ("Soldiers of Destiny"). Politics now assumed the classic post-colonial format, with *Cumann na nGaedheal* representing *comprador* elements favouring the continuation of economic relations with the metropole, and *Fianna Fáil* demanding the reduction of dependency on Britain though industrialization behind tariff walls. The return of a *Fianna Fáil* government in 1932, with the support of the Labour Party, led to industrial expansion on an import-substitution basis.

However, opportunities for new members generated more interunion rivalry, which became interwoven with rising tension between Irish- and British-based unions. Under government pressure to reform, and worried that *Fianna Fáil* intended to further its industrialization programme on a cheap wages policy, the ITUC considered options for reorganisation. A proposal to restructure the ITUC unions into industrial unions was opposed by the amalgamateds and defeated by a largely British union bloc, leading to a split in the ITUC in 1945. While the breach was healed in 1959, significant union restructuring only took place in the 1980s and 1990s—and then due to adverse market forces rather than to industrial unionist ideals.

Conclusion

Viewed in a UK setting, the impact of syndicalism on Ireland becomes not merely intelligible but typical. Syndicalists had the choice of infiltrating existing unions—"boring from within", the ISEL approach—or forming their own unions. Where the latter policy was adopted, they were usually compelled to operate on the fringes of the existing labour movement, often among economically marginal sectors of the workforce. The Industrial Workers of the World's (IWW's)

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[71] See Dick Geary (ed.), *Labour and Socialist Movements in Europe Before 1914*, Oxford: Berg, 1989; P.F. Brissenden, *The IWW: A Study of American Syndicalism*, New York: Columbia University Press, New York, 1920. The importance of marginal workers in the culture of the Wobblies is captured vividly in Joyce L. Kornbluh (ed.), *Rebel Voices: an IWW Anthology*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964.

strongholds lay in the western states of America among miners and migrant workers. In Canada, a clear division emerged in postw ar unrest between the craft unions, based on the traditional industries of the eastern provinces, and the One Big Union (OBU) which originated in British Columbia and relied on newly organised workers. Farm labourers made up almost half of the *Unione Sindicale Italiana's* (the Italian Syndicalist Union's, or USI) pre-war membership.[71] In South Africa, syndicalists were more successful in organising outside the mainstream unions than in "boring from within".[72] As an undeveloped region of an advanced industrial country, semi-integrated in its popular culture, but politically deviant and economically distinct, with employers prepared to accept craft unions but opposed to the unionization of labourers, Ireland offered a very representative location for a mass syndicalist movement.

Where the Irish example compared poorly was in the weakness of its ideological core and theoretical articulation. Its transient popularity relied on a conjuncture of factors: the coincidence of Labour disenchantment with British-based unions, the presence of two exceptional leaders, Connolly and Larkin, in two periods of exceptionally intense class conflict in Europe, the first of which, 1907 to 1914, was profoundly influenced by syndicalism, and the growth of separatist nationalism.

For all that, few national Labour movements can be said to owe their very existence to syndicalism: without it, Ireland, like Scotland and Wales, would have retained a London-centred trade unionism. Shorn of its revolutionism, industrial unionism remained a theme in Irish Labour thinking on strategy up to the 1970s. The last echo of syndicalism was lost in 1990, when the ITGWU and the Workers' Union of Ireland merged to become the Services, Industrial, Professional, and Technical Union, and Liberty Hall discontinued the badge marked "ITGWU-OBU".

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[72] I am obliged to Lucien van der Walt for this point, and for comments on the text generally.

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Part Two: Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Postcolonial World

Peruvian Anarcho-Syndicalism: adapting transnational influences and forging counterhegemonic practices, 1905–1930

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At first glance early 20th century Peru would seem an unlikely setting for anarcho-syndicalism to flourish. A predominantly agrarian society with a large and economically marginal indigenous population, Peru scarcely resembled a nation in the second stage of industrial manufacturing. Despite significant capitalist growth in Peru's export sectors (chiefly mining, sugar, cotton, wool), vast areas of the nation were largely unaffected by capitalist change. With the exception of Lima-Callao, Peru's capital and adjacent port city, which served as the nation's administrative, commercial, and financial centre, sizable urban economies were conspicuously absent. Not surprisingly, given this context, the massive influx of European immigrants that catalyzed the anarcho-syndicalist labour movements in Argentina and Brazil bypassed Peru.

Yet Peru was not entirely isolated from anarchist currents. Anarchist ideas and publications circulated widely in Peru by the first decade of the 20th century. Manuel González Prada, a Peruvian aristocrat and social gadfly, and a handful of radical immigrant intellectuals based in Lima facilitated the dissemination of anarchist thought. Simultaneously, a nucleus of self-taught craftsmen and machine-tenders inspired by the writings of Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Malatesta, spearheaded a movement to organise workers in Lima-Callao based on anarchosyndicalist doctrine. By dint of their efforts anarcho-syndicalism would become the dominant radical ideology of Peru's fledgling labour movement. Although the influence of anarcho-syndicalism was strongest in Lima-Callao, it also spread to working-class elements along Peru's northern coast, and central and southern highland regions.[1] The ideals and practice of anarcho-syndicalism appealed to a diverse spectrum of urban craftsmen, factory and transport workers, stevedores, and rural proletarians.[2] Adherents of anarcho-syndicalism however would constitute a minority of Peru's urban and rural working-classes. Nevertheless, because of their tremendous determination and activism, anarcho-syndicalism would profoundly influence working-class struggles, organisation, and culture in Peru during the first three decades of the 20th century.

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[1] There are no national level studies of anarcho-syndicalism in Peru. The extant historiography focuses almost exclusively on Lima-Callao. Evidence of the influence of anarcho-syndicalism among workers along Peru's northern coast and in the central sierra can be found in Demetrio Ramos Rao, *Mensaje de Trujillo del anarquismo al aprismo*, Trujillo: TAREA, 1987, and Fiona Wilson, "Género y clase en un pueblo de los Andes", in *Mujeres Latinoamericanas: Diez Ensayos y una historia colectiva*, Lima: Flora Tristán Centro de la Mujer Peruana, 1988, 95–138.

[2] Carl Levy has pointed out the futility of "identifying a natural constituency" for syndicalism. Carl Levy, "Currents of Italian Syndicalism before 1926", *International Review of Social History*, 45:2, 2000, 209–250.

This chapter examines how anarcho-syndicalist ideas were adapted to Peruvian contexts, primarily in Lima-Callao and the southern region of Arequipa, Cuzco, and Puno during the 1910s and 1920s, the heyday of Peruvian anarcho-syndicalism. It analyzes the ways anarchosyndicalism challenged the combination of oligarchic rule by Peru's *creole* planter class (sugar and cotton) and British and US imperialism in the form of economic control over the lucrative export sectors (copper, silver, oil) and domestic manufacturing (e.g. textiles).[3] This challenge mainly consisted of organising labour unions and cultural associations, fostering a radical proletarian counterculture, and promoting class struggles.

The Origins of Anarcho-Syndicalism in Lima-Callao

The formation of a working-class in Lima-Callao can be traced to the 1890s and the early 1900s when an export boom stimulated unprecedented growth in the urban economy. Native and foreign capitalists involved in the export sectors channelled a portion of their profits into new financial institutions, infrastructure projects, utility companies, and consumer goods industries.

Accompanying this economic expansion was a dramatic increase in the urban labouring population. In Lima the number of manual workers had risen from roughly 9,000 in 1876 to nearly 24,000 in 1908. By the latter date, artisan and factory workers accounted for 17 percent of Lima's estimated 140,000 inhabitants.[4] In Callao the labour force expanded less rapidly. Yet between 1905 and 1920 it would double in size to approximately 8,000 out of a total population of 52,000.[5] The composition of this incipient working class was extraordinarily heterogeneous; workers were divided by origins, sex, race, ethnicity, age, and skill.[6] Irrespective of these differences however, they tended to work long hours (12–16 hour days) under harsh conditions, and earn miserable wages that scarcely covered their subsistence needs.

To ameliorate their dismal working and living conditions workers began to embrace anarchism. The turn toward anarchism was in part a response to the failure of mutualism and workers' inability to obtain satisfaction from Peru's elite-controlled political party system. It was also strongly encouraged by dissident elites.

Foremost among them was Manuel González Prada, an upper-class intellectual, who became an anarchist as a result of his contacts with French and Spanish anarchists during a self-imposed European exile (1891–1898). González Prada lent his considerable talents to persuading workers to reject mutualism in favour of anarchist practices. He also founded *Los Parias* ("The Pariahs"), the first anarchist publication in 1904. Other anarchist papers soon appeared: *La Simiente Roja*

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[3] Foreign firms dominated Peru's mineral extraction industries by 1910. See, Rose-mary Thorp and Geoffrey Bertram, *Peru 1890–1977: Growth & Policy in an Open Economy*, New York: Columbia University, 1979, 40 and Ch.5.

[4] *Resumen del censo de las Provincias de Lima y Callao* 17 de diciembre de 1920, Lima: Im Americana—Plz. del Teatro, 1927, 49–52, 166–174. The author is responsible for all translations.

[5] *Censo de la Provincia Constitucional del Callao* 20 de junio de 1905, Lima: Im y Libreria de San Pedro, 1906, 189; *Resumen del censo de las Provincias de Lima y Callao*, 3–5, 49–53, 55.

[6] Demographic data for this period is incomplete and necessarily imprecise. Lima's working class was undoubtedly more diverse than in other cities and regions of the country. For example, according to a 1920 census the province of Lima had 224,000 inhabitants comprised of 208,000 Peruvian nationals, 16,000 foreigners, 85,000 whites, 31,000 Indians, 10,000 Blacks, 8,000 "Yellows", and 89,000 *mestizos*. The Indian population, which as late as 1940 constituted at least 40 percent of the total population, was concentrated in 9 out of Peru's 23 departments, mainly in the central and southern highland departments. See, Resumen del censo de las Provincias de Lima y Callao, 118–123; Thomas M. Davies, Jr., *Indian Integration in Peru*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 3.

("The Red Seed", 1905–1907), *El Hambriento* ("The Hungry", 1905– 1910), *Humanidad* ("Humanity", 1906–1907), and *El Oprimido* ("The Oppressed", 1907–1909).

Staffed mainly by radical intellectuals like Gliserio Tassara, Angel Origgi Galli, Carlos del Barzo, and Inocencio Lombarozzi (Chilean), these papers exposed workers to the writings by European anarchists and anarchist perspectives on the state, the bourgeoisie, the Church, property, and class relations. Anarchists slogans like Kropotkin's "Liberties are not bestowed, they're seized" were also prominently displayed on the papers' mastheads.[7]

The indoctrination of workers in anarchist thought was further assisted by anarchist study circles. Jointly operated by workers and radical intellectuals, The Centre of Socialist Studies First of May (1906– 1908) in Lima and the group Love and Light (1911–1919) in Callao provided a forum for workers to discuss anarchist precepts. Like the anarchist press, the study circles emphasized the ideal of workers' selfemancipation and workers' cultural advancement. In addition, they inculcated workers in an internationalist outlook. On October 17, 1909, the Centre of Socialist Studies First of May organised a public protest in response to the Spanish government's execution of the anarchist and educational innovator, Francesco Ferrer i Guàrdia.[8]

The year before an anarchist musical group associated with the centre held a performance to commemorate a massacre of Chilean mine workers in 1907.[9] Annual May Day commemorations in honour of the Chicago martyrs were also supported by the study circles and the anarchist press. The first May Day celebration, organised mainly by the Federation of Bakery Workers— Star of Peru (*Federación de Obreros Panaderos "Estrella del Perú"*) in Lima took place in 1905. The celebration not only underscored international working-class solidarity in the struggle for the 8 hour day but it honoured Peru's first worker martyr in the cause.[10]

Anarcho-syndicalism firmly began to take hold in Lima-Callao in 1911. In the course of that year the urban working class mounted its first general strike and succeeded in organising the first class-based resistance societies. The general strike originated with a strike led by anarcho-syndicalists and backed by five hundred workers at the U.S.owed Vitarte Cotton Mill in March 1911. The strikers demanded a wage increase, a reduction of the work day from 13 to 10 hours, and the abolition of the night shift. The strike would endure for 29 days and eventually erupted into a general strike on April 10, bringing Lima's business and transport to a standstill. The following day President Leguía intervened in the conflict and forced management to accept the workers' demands.[11] The general strike underscored the effectiveness of direct action tactics and working-class solidarity. It also revealed the limits of workers' power inasmuch as the outcome was ultimately decided by state intervention. In order to preserve their hard won gains and to offset the growing power of capital, textile workers in Vitarte founded the Textile Workers' Unification of Vitarte, a resistance society in May 1911. The Unification dedicated itself "to serve and defend the rights of the proletariat in general and the textile workers in particular".[12] Following Vitarte's example, textile workers at Lima's major mills organised resistance societies.

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[7] *El Hambriento*, no. 21, February 1907, 1.

[8] Emilio Costilla Larrea, *Apuntes para la historia de la lucha social en el perú*, Lima; Ediciones Peru Nuevo, 1944, 31.

[9] The massacre of nitrate mine workers in Chile took place in Iquique on December 21, 1907: Costilla Larrea, 33.

[10] For an analysis of how Peruvian workers appropriated and ritualized May Day, see, Ricardo Melgar Bao, "The Dual Identity of May Day in Peru", in Andrea Panaccione (ed.), *The Memory of May Day*, Venezia: Marsilio Editoria, 1989, 673–675.

[11] "La Huelga de Vitarte I el Paro General", *La Protesta*, no.3, abril de 1911, 1; "El Paro General", *Variedades*, no.163, 15 April 1911, 437–441.

[12] The founding document of the Textile Workers' Unification of Vitarte can be found in Julio Portocarrero,

Anarcho-syndicalist organisation and practice in Lima-Callao gained momentum in 1912 and 1913. In October 1912 workers affiliated with the anarcho-syndicalist oriented *La Protesta* group (1911–1926) succeeded in organising the first Workers' Regional Federation of Peru (FORP). It colligated the textile, bakery, and electrical workers' resistance societies, among others, in Lima-Callao. FORP modeled itself after Argentina's Workers' Regional Federation (*Federación obrera regional argentina,* FORA). And like FORA, it espoused the principles and goals of anarchism and syndicalism and was committed to both short term improvements and social revolution. In 1913 FORA sent two delegates to Lima-Callao to promote solidarity between the two organisations and to encourage Peruvian workers to begin laying the foundations for a national labour confederation. Conditions however were not conducive to achieving this lofty goal. In fact, FORP disbanded in 1916 owing to the fragility of Lima-Callao's working-class organisations in the context of economic instability related to World War I and state anti-labour hostility.[13]

FORP's dissolution proved to be a temporary setback. Between 1916 and 1919 anarcho-syndicalist workers redoubled their efforts to organise Lima's workers including rural wage earners on nearby sugar and cotton estates.[14] To aid in their organising activities, they encouraged existing labour organisations to establish their own presses and to disseminate anarcho-syndicalist ideas. By 1919, shortly after the death of Manuel González Prada, worker-run union presses had replaced the anarchist papers once directed by non-worker intellectuals like González Prada.[15] Among the new union presses were *El Sindicalista* ("The Syndicalist", shoemakers' union), *El Obrero Textil* ("The Textile Worker", textile workers' federation), *La voz del panadero* ("The Voice of the Baker", bakers' union), and *El Electricista* ("The Electrician", electrical workers' union). As a result of the stepped up labour organising and propaganda activity, the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement in Lima-Callao significantly improved its organisational strength and disruptive capabilities. Between 1918 and 1919 several new labour federations were established (e.g. Textile Workers' Federation of Peru, or FTTP; the Print Workers Federation; the Federation of Masons) and FORP was resuscitated.

In the immediate post-war period a fertile climate existed for the resurgence of Lima-Callao's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement. Workers' living and working conditions had deteriorated during the war years. Real wages had steadily eroded as the cost of living had risen by 100 percent since 1913. This intolerable situation prompted a spate of strikes in 1918 by organised textile, railway, bakery, dock, and leather workers. Although in some cases these strikes were settled with wage concessions, labour militancy continued unabated.

The most significant strike occurred in December 1918 when approximately 2900 textile workers employed in Lima's 9 largest textile factories walked off the job demanding the 8 hour workday. One month earlier President Pardo had issued a decree granting women and minors an 8 hour workday in an attempt to placate workers. This proved to be a miscalculation. Unwilling to accept the state's restricted application of the 8 hour workday, anarcho-syndicalist workers

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Sindicalismo peruano: primera etapa 1911–1930, Lima: Editorial Gráfica Labour S.A., 1987, 35.

[13] Government persecution of the Vitarte textile union intensified between 1915 and 1917. The arrest of its principal leaders brought about its temporary disintergration in 1918. However, it would be re-activated that same year. See Portocarrero, *sindicalismo peruano*, 39–43.

[14] Carolina Carlessi, *Mujeres en el origen del movimiento sindical: crónica de una lucha, Huacho 1916–1917*, Lima: Ediciones Lilith y TAREA, 1984, 59–71.

[15] González Prada died in July 1918. *La Protesta* was the only significant anarchosyndicalist paper that was not sponsored by a particular labour union. It was, however, edited and published by workers.

prepared to organize a general strike. In January 1919 the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement backed by broad sectors of Lima-Callao's working class, and university students engaged in a mass general strike. Although key anarchosyndicalist strike leaders were arrested and tortured, the general strike persisted.[16] After three days of street clashes and business inactivity, President Pardo, on January 15 acceded to what Delfín Lévano, the anarcho-syndicalist union leader, called "the inalienable right" of workers to the 8 hour workday."[17] The conquest of the eight hour day constituted a milestone in the development of the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement and it validated the prodigious efforts to promote workingclass consciousness, solidarity, and union organisation.[18]

A few months after the January general strike, anarcho-syndicalist workers organised another mass protest to address the cost of living crisis. In April, Adalberto Fonkén, a descendant of Asian coolie labourers and a former leader of the Vitarte textile union, Carlos Barba, a founder and general secretary of the Union of Shoemakers and Associates (1914), and Nicolás Gutarra, a cabinetmaker and former secretary general of FORP (1915), among other prominent anarcho-syndicalist leaders established a Committee for the Cheapening of Prime Necessities (*Comité Pro-Abaratamiento de las Subsistencias).* The committee soon established chapters throughout Lima-Callao with ties to 30,000 workers. To press its demands for price reductions of basic food-stuffs, the committee staged a series of street demonstrations and marches involving thousands of workers and their families.

President Pardo and the business community refused to bow to the committee's demands. Troops and mounted police were deployed to break up the demonstrations. On May 27 the committee declared a general strike that paralyzed economic activity in Lima-Callao. The general strike lasted for five days. "The net result of the five days of disorder", according to a U.S. observer, "was a death list that may be conservatively placed at one hundred, several hundred wounded, from 300 to 500 prisoners in the Lima jails, property loss and damage that will reach at least two million soles, all business demoralized for a week and a severe lesson imposed upon the anarchistic Maximalist elements of Lima and Callao and their misguided followers".[19]

This assessment is accurate to a point. The general strike failed to win concessions but it did not weaken the organisers' resolve. Indeed, on the day Gutarra and Barba were released from

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[16] Many anarcho-syndicalist workers who played prominent roles in the 8 hour day struggle were arrested and tortured by the police. José Sandoval Morales, Arturo Sabroso Montoya, Manuel Cabana, and Aurelio Reyes were left physically (and likely psychologically) scarred as a result of police torture. See, José Sandoval Morales, *"Cómo se gesto la jornada maxima de ocho horas en el perú",* unpublished manuscript, 1972 and Interview with Arturo Sabroso, conducted by Steve Stein, Lima, Peru, January 1974, 5. The transcribed interview is housed in The Arturo Sabroso Collection, A.I. 98 (1/28).

[17] Quoted in Ricardo Martínez de la Torre, *Apuntes para una interpretación marxista de historia social del peru*, vol.1, Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1975, 427. The general strike for the 8 hour day in Lima-Callao took place from January 13–15, 1919, but it should be noted that strikes by textile, bakery, and port workers had been underway since December and early January.

[18] The 1918–1919 struggle for the eight hour workday has justifiably received a great deal of scholarly attention. It is also the subject of some controversy. David Parker, in a recent revisionist study, has called into question the impact of workers' collective actions. He contends elite acceptance of the 8 hour workday rather than working-class solidarity was mainly responsible for the success of the strike. See David Parker, "Peruvian Politics and the Eight-Hour Day: Rethinking the 1919 General Strike," *Canadian Journal of History*, December 1995, 417–438. For a balanced analysis of this struggle see, Peter Blanchard, *The Origins of the Peruvian Labour Movement, 1883–1919*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982, ch.9.

[19] "General Strike in Lima & Callao", *The West Coast Leader*, May 31, 1919, 1.

jail where they were held until July 7, they confronted President Leguía who appeared on the balcony of the national palace. Before a multitude of supporters, Gutarra defiantly informed Leguía that "the populace of today was not the tame one of yesterday which had silently borne all tyrannies". After condemning the police actions and reciting a list of demands, he declared, "the social problem is not solved by a full stomach—the mind also needs feeding so that education may reach all—we want justice, liberty, and equality". He concluded his peroration with the threat that the proletariat was tired of promises and would take to the barricades to defend their liberties and rights.[20] Two days later anarcho-syndicalist workers re-activated FORP and proclaimed its mission was to "do away with capitalism" and to create a new society in which "everyone works and produces according to their abilities and receives according to their needs".[21]

Gutarra was right. The anarcho-syndicalist labour movement through its propaganda and praxis had dissolved any lingering passivity, deference, and fatalism on the part of organised workers in Lima-Callao.[22] Indeed, this would be further reflected in its aggressive response to new threats from the state and employers. Leguía's promulgation of a new constitution in 1920 with strict provisions to regulate strikes and to subject labour conflicts to compulsory arbitration elicited condemnation and street protests from workers. The Local Workers' Federation (FOL) which replaced FORP in 1921 lashed out at the government's "legal ruse" and vowed to ignore it.[23]

A few months later, in September 1921 textile workers seized El Inca mill in response to management's plans to close the factory due to the adverse business environment. Ultimately, workers were dislodged from the factory by troops acting on orders of the local prefect. The following day Lima's business paper, *El Comercio* ran an editorial admonishing workers against imitating factory takeovers in Italy and pointing out workers inability to effectively manage complex enterprises.[24]

The war of position

Did the emphasis on union organisation, working-class solidarity, and the pursuit of short-term material interests cause FOL and its affiliates to neglect workers' cultural emancipation? To what extent did their anarcho-syndicalist project entail the development of an autonomous and oppositional working-class culture? What follows is an examination of the discourse and practice of Lima-Callao's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement in the 1920s as it relates to these questions. The evidence strongly indicates that anarcho-syndicalists prioritized forging a counter-hegemonic working-class culture capable of contesting and supplanting the dominant culture of Peru's ruling elites. In short, they opted for a "war of position" attacking the legitimacy and moral authority of bourgeois rule. This strategy involved undermining dominant social conventions

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[20] "Yesterday's Demonstration", *La Prensa*, 8 July 1919.

[21] Cited in Martínez de la Torre, *Apuntes*, vol I, 49–50.

[22] Steve Stein has argued that Lima's workers had internalized a deferential, resigned, and fatalistic outlook. See, Steve Stein, "Cultura popular y politica popular en los comienzos del siglo xx en Lima", in Stein, ed., *Lima Obrera, 1900–1930*, vol. I, Lima: Ediciones El Virrey, 1986, 73 and chapter 3.

[23] Wilfredo Kapsoli, *Mariátegui y los congresos obreros*, Lima: Empresa Editora Amauta S.A., 1980, 16–17, 21.

[24] "El movimiento obrera de esta mañana", *El Comercio* 13 de 1921; "En las fábricas de tejidos", *El Comercio*, 14 September 1921.

and 'naturalized' values by inculcating workers in an oppositional ethos through an alternative network of autonomous social and cultural structures.[25]

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[25] Antonio Gramsci's delineation of the "war of position" aptly describes the strategy adopted by Peruvian anarcho-syndicalists. This is not to suggest however, that Peruvian anarcho-syndicalists were influenced directly by Gramsci or embraced his ideas regarding a revolutionary vanguard and seizure of the state. For an explication of Gramsci's strategy of the "war of position" see, Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey N. Smith (eds.), *Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers, 1989, 229–239, and Joseph V. Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought*, Oxford, Great Britian: Oxford University Press, 1987, 50–55, 205–209.

Fig. 6. Nicolás Gutarra, Peruvian anarcho-syndicalist leader, is hoisted on the shoulders of the crowd on May Day 1919, Lima.

At FOL's first congress in 1921 worker representatives from 23 labour organisations reaffirmed the necessity of elevating working-class morality and culture. In recognition of the inseparability of cultural emancipation and social revolution, they approved FOL's "exclusive dedication to the economic, moral and intellectual improvement of the working-class".[26] By simultaneously asserting its commitment to both an economic and a cultural agenda, FOL unambiguously signalled the importance it assigned to workers' socio-cultural development. To underscore this point, it authorized the establishment of an official "workers' daily" and a "popular worker library".[27] Two months later, under the direction of Adalberto Fonkén, the popular worker library opened on Trujillo Street in central Lima to male and female workers of all races. Here workers were informed they would have access to rational books capable of "breaking the darkness of popular consciousness", which in turn would empower them to act against "despotic bourgeois social edifice" {sic}.[28]

Even if FOL had not endorsed the need to promote workers' moral and cultural edification doubtless its affiliates would have done so anyway. An influential minority of highly motivated anarcho-syndicalist worker-intellectuals within FOL's labour organisations were determined to free workers from the social constraints and cultural marginalization imposed by Peru's aristocratic order. For example, as early as 1919, union workers at Santa Catalina woollen mill established their own press, *El Nudito* ("The Little Link"), which published local labour news and social commentary. The paper proudly boasted "it is not edited by intellectuals but is written by workers and for workers".[29] Ultimately, *El Nudito* would be superseded in 1920 by the FTTP's official organ, *El Obrero Textil*. Arguably the most important union paper in Lima during the 1920s, *El Obrero Textil*, readily embraced FOL's cultural mission insisting that "the more culturized [sic] the people are, the sooner they conquer their liberty".[30] This view resonated with print, carpenter, and construction workers' federations, who in turn published presses and extolled the virtue of workers' self-expression. Under the editorial direction of anarcho-syndicalist worker-intellectuals, these and other union presses provided a forum for workers to publish poetry, discuss moral issues, address female workers' emancipation and the 'Indian question", debate ideological points, and analyze capital-labour relations.[31] To further advance the socio-cultural and political education of workers the union presses also utilized drawings and graphic images. *El Constructor* (The Builder), the official organ of the Construction Workers' Union, for example, published an instructive cartoon depicting a workman breaking the chains of militarism, politics,

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[26] The declaration of principles adopted at FOL's First Congress were printed in *Claridad*, no.1, primera quincena de May 1923, 29.

[27] Ibid., 30.

[28] "Por la cultura del pueblo", *El Obrero Textil*, no.25, primera quincena August 1921, 8.

[29] *El Nudito*, 29 June 1919, 6.

[30] "Por la cultura del pueblo" *El Obrero Textil*, no.25, primera quincena August 1921, 8.

[31] For a content and thematic analysis of the anarcho-syndicalist and union presses for this period, see, Guillermo Sánchez Ortíz, *La prensa obrera 1900–1930 (analisis de El Obrero Textil)*, Lima: n., 1987, and Garbiela Machuca Castillo, *La tinta, el pensamiento y las manos: la prensa popular anarquista, anarcosindicalista y obrera-sindical en Lima 1900–1930*, Lima: Universidad de San Martin de Porres, 2006.

the clergy, and the State, with the caption that "an offence against one worker, is an offence against all".[32]

In addition to the proliferation of union presses, concern for workers' 'moral and intellectual improvement' prompted FOL and its affiliates to sponsor a panoply of cultural and recreational associations. This included workers' libraries, theatre and art associations, musical groups, and sports clubs. Taken together these autonomous worker associations constituted a concerted effort to remake working class social practices and culture in Lima-Callao. The involvement of workers, their families and communities, in these associations allowed for the assimilation of an anarcho-syndicalist discourse about self-improvement, moral codes of behaviour (e.g. abstention from gambling and alcohol), working-class dignity and solidarity, and social justice.

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[32] *El Constructor*, no.11, May 1925, 1.

Fig. 7. Peruvian anarcho-syndicalism: breaking the bonds of oppression, exploitation, and ignorance.

Illustrative of this point is the Workers' Musical Centre (*Centro Musical Obrero de Lima*, or CMO). Founded in 1922 under the direction of Delfín Lévano and with the strong backing of FOL, the CMO provided a musical and a political education for its working class audience. Performing in Lima's working class zones of El Cercado, La Victoria, Barrios Altos, and Rimac, the CMO exposed workers to a variety of musical forms and to songs centred on workers' emancipation, rights, liberty, triumphs, and passions.[33] Among the repertoire of songs performed by the CMO were "*La Internacional*" (The International), "*Anarco*", "*El Paria*" ("The Pariah"), "*Canto del Pueblo*" ("Song of the People"), "*Lira rebelde proletaria*" ("Rebellious Proletariat Lyre"), and "*Canto del Trabajo*" ("Song of Work").[34] This last song typifies the social criticism and spirit of rebellion propagated by the CMO:[35]

> Come all comrades
> To the struggle that today prevails
> The free red flag
> Shines toward the sun of the future
> In the country and workshops
> They exploit us by piecework
> Like beasts of burden
> Capital mistreats us
>
> Our masters and bosses
> They promise to relieve us
> But instead of making us better
> They deprive us of even bread
>
> The rescue of work, etc.
>
> Disunited, plebeians we are
> But strong when we are united;
> Only the well-organized will triumph,
> The ones that have heart.

To ensure that workers assimilated the lyrics of these protest songs, individual unions printed and distributed revolutionary songbooks. The Santa Catalina textile union, for example, in honour of May Day in 1927, published a collection of "Universal Proletarian Hymns and Proletarian Songs of Today". The union claimed it published the songbook to engender a "new social ethic" and to contribute to "the beautiful labour of removing popular prejudices".[36]

Anarcho-syndicalists also utilized an array of new social practices, rituals, and celebrations to inculcate workers in oppositional values and to transform their worldviews. In the textile mill

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[33] Edmundo Lévano La Rosa, "Un cancionero Escondido: Historia y Música del Centro Musical Obrero de Lima: 1922–1924", in *I Convocatoria Nacional 'José Maria Arguedas' Avances de Investigación—Música*, Lima: Biblioteca Nacional del Perú, 13–37.

[34] Ibid., 19, 24–25.

[35] For all 11 stanzas of *Canto del Trabajo* see, Ibid., 34.

[36] *Cancionero Revolucionario*, Imprenta Editorial Minerva, 1927.

town of Vitarte on the outskirts of Lima, a group of anarcho-syndicalist textile workers organised an annual tree planting festival that became a celebration of working class culture and solidarity.

The first *fiesta de la planta* (festival of the plant) occurred on December 25, 1921.[37] Organisers intentionally chose this date for their secular festival to compete with the Christian religious holiday. The day-long celebration involved workers and union organisations from the surrounding region, and consisted of class-inflected speeches, tributes to "fallen comrades in the social struggle", tree planting rites, picnics, soccer matches, and musical and dance performances. All these events were free of alcohol consumption in keeping with anarchist moral strictures.[38]

Similarly, on a smaller scale, unions affiliated with FOL ritually held soirées in celebration of the establishment of labour unions or to raise funds for strikes and other union expenses.[39] In addition to these social functions, the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement continued to hold May Day celebrations throughout the 1920s. Significantly, all of these events allowed workers to assert their power in public spaces.

Another important institution embraced by anarcho-syndicalists to advance working-class culture was the popular university. Organised by reform-minded students from San Marcos University, the popular university was conceived as an outreach program to broadly educate and train workers who in turn would serve as pedagogues dedicated to the cultural emancipation of all workers and peasants.[40]

Despite the dominant role of students as administrators and teachers, the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement endorsed worker enrolment in the Popular Universities (UPs) established in Lima and Vitarte in 1921. This imprimatur stemmed largely from the fact that the UPs were expressly committed to workers' integral education and the cause of social justice. It didn't hurt the UPs' appeal that they were named after Manuel González Prada, the anarchist intellectual. Nevertheless, some workers, according to *El Obrero Textil*, were reluctant to participate in the UPs because of their "tendency to view with distrust anything that does not originate from the working-class".[41]

For the most part, however, anarcho-syndicalist workers were eager to join the UPs as both students and teachers, and to infuse them with an anarcho-syndicalist sensibility. For example, in Vitarte, workers hung red banners from the walls of the UP broadcasting slogans like "Truth, Justice, Liberty", "Culture Liberates Man", and "The drunk is a being without will". A sign marked with three eights painted in red and white was placed in the middle of the proscenium to underscore the UP's support for eight hours of work, eight hours of study, and eight hours of rest—a position in accord with the First International.[42]

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[37] The first festival of the plant which involved the participation of pro-labour university students is described in detail in, "El exito de la fiesta de la planta*", La Crónica*, 26 December 1921, 2–5.

[38] For an insightful analysis of the cultural and class implications of the fiesta de la planta, see, Rafael Tapia, "La fiesta de la planta de Vitarte", *Pretextos*, 3:4, 1992, 187–205.

[39] For example, on May 31, 1924 the print workers' federation organised a series of poetry readings, comedy shows, and movies to raise money for the federation. See *Historia de la Federación Gráfica del Perú*, Lima: Federación Gráfica, 1985, 151.

[40] See, Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, "Defensa de la Universidad Popular", *El Tiempo*, 23 September 1921, 1; Jeffrey Klaiber, S.J., "The Popular Universities and the Origins of Aprismo, 1921–24", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 55:4, 1975, 693–715.

[41] Cited in Piedad Pareja, *Anarquismo y sindicalismo en el peru*, Lima: Ediciones Rikchay Peru No.3, 1978, 89.

[42] Josefa Yarleque de Marquina, *El Maestro ó Democracia en Miniatura, Vitarte*, Peru: n.p., 1963, 33 and 43.

For the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement the UPs formed part of its extensive network of cultural associations which could be harnessed in support of its project and class struggles. A case in point was the mass protest against Leguía and the Catholic Church's attempt to officially consecrate Peru to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in May 1923. Threatened by the possibility of expanding Church influence and the suppression of freedom of thought, FOL joined with the university students in mobilizing its union members, cultural groups, and the UPs in mass street demonstrations against the consecration. After a pitched street battle between security forces and protestors, resulting in the death of a worker and a student, the Leguía government deemed it prudent to cancel the consecration.[43] Leguía also exacted revenge on "the centres of popular agitation", his derisive appellation for the UPs.[44] In the wake of the protest students and workers linked to the UPs were arrested and many were deported.

Leguía not only viewed the UPs as subversive but the anarchosyndicalist cultural infrastructure in toto. Acting frequently at the behest of the Church, employers, and elite politicians, Leguía ordered the suppression of workers' libraries and union presses. In 1921 police razed the workers' Popular Library Ricardo Palma in Neptune Park and seized the holdings of the workers' library in Rimac the following year.[45]

The publication of union papers was often interrupted or extinguished altogether by state repression. After two years of circulation, *Solidaridad*, one of the official organs of FOL, was forcibly closed in 1927. State repression was also accompanied by bourgeois censorship. In 1924 M.A. Arcelles, the secretary general of FOL, complained that the bourgeois press refused to publish union denunciations of inhumane treatment by capitalist enterprises.[46] In addition to worker libraries and union presses, Leguía also targeted the CMO for repression on the pretext that its members participated in the 1923 anti-consecration protest. FOL denounced the Leguía regime in 1924 for its "abominable campaign to impede the redemption of the working-class by cultural empowerment". This vehement condemnation was triggered by the government's arrest of a Chilean student in Vitarte for having delivered a presentation on the Mexican Revolution to union workers.[47]

The Peruvian variant of revolutionary syndicalism

Any account of anarcho-syndicalism in Lima-Callao must address not only the emphasis on class-based unionism and workers' countercultural politics, but the multiple meanings of revolutionary syndicalism. In 1921 FOL formally declared its adherence to revolutionary syndicalist doctrine. Six years later it would reaffirm this ideological and political orientation at the Second Local Workers' Congress. At the First Local Workers' Congress, general secretary Delfin Lévano, defined revolutionary syndicalism as "not only achieving through worker organisation and direct action, immediate improvements but also the intellectual and moral elevation of the worker".

[43] "Political Religious Disorders", *The West Coast Leader*, May 23, 1923. See also, Portocarrero, *sindicalismo peruano*, 110–114.

[44] Luis F. Barrientos Casós, *Los tres sindicalismos*, Lima: Ediciones Continente, 1958,165.

[45] "Destrucción de la biblioteca popular Ricardo Palma", *Variedades*, 26 de febrero de 1921, 452; Walter Huamani, "La Biblioteca Obrera de "Abajo del Puente", *Revista del Archivo General de la Nación*, 11, May 1995, 136.

[46] "Denuncia que se negaron a publicar los periódicos burgueses", *Claridad*, no.7, primera quincena November 1924, 17.

[47] *Claridad,* segunda quincena de September 1924, 12.

He added " … it goes against whatever constitutes an error, obstacle, falsehood that impedes the effective solidarity of all the exploited of the earth and it marches toward the future, toward the goal of the medium program of syndicalism: the suppression of the employer and the wage earner, implanting on the free earth, a society of free producers".[48]

Although interpretations of revolutionary syndicalism would vary among FOL's members, most shared Lévano's stress on the practical goals of worker organisation, solidarity, and cultural uplift. The libertarian social revolution was a long way off. Arturo Sabroso, a textile union leader, elaborated on this outlook in an article entitled "For Revolutionary Syndicalism". Writing in *El Obrero Textil* shortly after the first congress, Sabroso endorsed the idea that Peruvian workers 'should be revolutionaries' but with the caveat that syndicalist organisation, working class unity, and "forming CONSCIOUSNESS in our comrades" must come first. He also cautioned against impulsiveness and urged careful, well-considered syndical action.[49]

Espousing a pragmatic brand of revolutionary syndicalism made sense in the Peruvian context. As one observer of Lima's labour movement noted in 1921 it suffered from the ongoing influence of conservative artisan organisations, the lack of class awareness and union organisation among sectors of the urban labour force, and the persistent hostility of the state and employers.[50]

Peruvian anarcho-syndicalists interchangeably referred to themselves as revolutionary syndicalists and syndicalists in the 1920s. Their understanding of the principles and practices of revolutionary syndicalism were derived mainly from the First International, the French General Confederation of Labour (*Confédération Général du Travail*, CGT, 1902–1914), and the Argentine FORA.[51] In essence they subscribed to workers' self-reliance and the primacy of class-based unions in the struggle to achieve short-term economic improvements and comprehensive emancipation through the destruction of capitalism and the bourgeois state. They also embraced the repudiation of party politics and electoralism in favour of direct action tactics, especially the general strike. Within these broad parameters Peruvian anarchosyndicalists like their counterparts in Europe and elsewhere tended to adapt revolutionary syndicalist doctrine to fit local conditions and power relations.[52]

In response to unfavourable economic and political conditions, anarcho-syndicalists moderated their goals and pursued a pragmatic form of class struggle. Increasing competition in the urban labour market owing to weak economic growth and an influx of rural migrants undermined organised labour's bargaining power and challenged its ability to represent the broad working-class. Between 1920 and 1931 Lima's population grew by 68 percent, from 223,807 to 376,097 inhabitants.[53] Over this same period the percentage of workers employed in manual trades and

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[48] Quoted in Guillermo Sánchez Ortiz, *Delfín Lévano: Biografía de un lider syndical (1895–1941)*, Lima: UNMSM, 1985, 112.

[49] "Por el Sindicalismo Revolucionario", *El Obrero Textil*, no.24, July 1921, 2–3.

[50] "Breve sinopsis del año obrero", *El Tiempo*, 16 January 1923, 1.

[51] See, for example, Arturo Sabroso Montoya, "Episodios de una época del sindicalismo autonoma", n.d., passim. The Arturo Sabroso Montoya Collection, AIV 924 (1/43), Lima, Peru.

[52] Revolutionary syndicalism assumed various organisational forms and practices depending on the national and regional context. For an international comparative analysis of revolutionary syndicalism see, Ralph Darlington, *Syndicalism and the Transition to Communism: An International Comparative Analysis*, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008; Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe, (eds.), *Revolutionary Syndicalism: An International Perspective*, Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1990.

[53] Steve Stein, *Populism in Peru: The Emergence of Mass Politics and the Politics of Social Control*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980, 51.

manufacturing climbed by just 1 percent.[54] Most of this increase occurred in the difficult to organise building trades and construction industry. Given this inauspicious economic environment and a regime determined to protect the interests of national and foreign capital, anarcho-syndicalists opted for a practical syndicalism commensurate with organised labour's limited strength.

Deferring revolutionary aims and actions, they focused instead on defending workers' rights and on improving workplace and living conditions. To these ends they employed both direct and indirect actions. Despite proclaiming "the strike" to be workers' weapon par excellence, FOL and its member unions often resorted to bargaining with employers and negotiating with state officials.[55] A combination of direct and indirect action could prove effective as when the union at El Inca cotton mill succeeded in thwarting a wage reduction after management had installed new automatic looms in 1928. The union staged a work stoppage and pressed the government's Labour Section to intervene.[56]

In general the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement sought to eschew high risk actions like general strikes. With the exception of 1923, when 3 general strikes were implemented, these were rare occurrences. FOL and its constituent federations reserved the use of general strikes and mass street demonstrations for extraordinary circumstances such as to seek the release of imprisoned labour leaders, to defend the right to unionize, and to overturn anti-labour decrees like the Road Conscription Act (discussed in detail in the next section). This tendency to avoid potentially costly direct confrontations with the state left one anarcho-syndicalist worker with the impression that revolutionary syndicalism was essentially "the conquest of workers' rights without going to extremes".[57]

Peruvian revolutionary syndicalism as incarnated by Lima-Callao's union movement had two additional prominent features. First, it displayed a keen interest in the emancipation of women and indigenous workers. Female workers were the targets of unionization efforts and considerable anarcho-syndicalist propaganda. Carrying a message of equal pay for equal work, anarcho-syndicalist sought to organise female workers in the textile and light consumer goods industries. FOL and the FTTP also sought to launch a campaign to organise Lima's 23,000 female domestic workers.[58]

The organisation and cultural emancipation of indigenous peasants was also major concern of the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement. This was reflected in union collaboration with the Tahuantinsuyo ProIndian Rights Central Committee (see next section) and the "indigenous liberation" agenda adopted by the Second Workers' Congress.[59] The second feature refers to its internationalist outlook. Lima's union presses maintained contact with anarcho-syndicalist organisations in the Americas and Europe and reported on labour news from around the world.[60] Anarcho-syndicalist unions also mobilized in response to external events. For example, despite

[54] Wilma Derpich, José Luis Huiza, and Cecilia Israel, *Lima años 30: salaries y costo de vida de la clase trabajadora*, Lima: Fundación Friedrich Ebert, 1985, 20.

[55] "La Huelga", *Solidaridad*, no.3, November 1925, 4.

[56] Martínez de la Torre, *Apuntes*, vol.. I, 109.

[57] Interview with Juan Alvarez, Lima, June 13, 1989.

[58] It appears the campaign was never fully realized. It is discussed in *La Antorcha*, 9 October 1933.

[59] Kapsoli, *Mariátegui*, 33–34.

[60] The Federation of Print Workers' press had direct links to the Argentine Syndical Union and its organ "The Proletarian Banner" and the Spanish Anarchist Federation, and the FTTP maintained contacted with the Argentine anarcho-syndicalist paper, *Argentina Obrero Textil*. See, *Historia de la Federación Gráfica del Perú*, *VOL*.1, 165– 168 and *El Obrero Textil*, primera quincena de August 1921, 4.

a government imposed news blackout on the execution of the anarchists Nicola and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in 1927, word spread quickly and organised labour responded with protest strikes.[61] Two days before the execution Callao's dockworkers expressed their condemnation by walking off the job. Railway workers followed suit. The FTTP also urged textile workers to strike and denounced those who didn't as "workers without consciousness".[62]

Revolutionary syndicalism as practiced by Lima-Callao's union movement was not without its critics. Indeed, criticism emerged within its own ranks and from groups sympathetic to anarcho-syndicalism. The Union of Workers in Civil Construction complained about FOL's bureaucracy and its penchant for "referring to revolutionary syndicalism every minute, at every critical juncture wanting to go with requests to the State".[63] The Federation of Carpenters and Similar Branches disapproved of conceding too much influence to non-workers like the university students.[64] The Anarchist Worker group criticized FOL for permitting Marxist politics and "false redemptive theories" to gain traction.[65]

This criticism was quickly dismissed in *Solidaridad* with the rejoinder that not a single union affiliate had embraced communist principles.[66] Revolutionary syndicalists had previously rejected this same allegation by anti-Bolshevik anarchists in *La Protesta* group.[67] Like the French CGT, FOL embraced all workers regardless of political orientation provided they accepted apolitical class-based unionism. FOL's apolitical stance however had its detractors and they would forcibly present their case at the Second Workers' Congress in 1927.

Pro-socialist workers and intellectuals at the Second Workers' Congress criticized FOL's abstention from politics and its ideological 'neutrality.' They called for workers' ideological indoctrination and the formation of a national labour confederation committed to seizure of the state and the redistribution of wealth.[68] Arturo Sabroso, who served as general secretary of the congress, was among those who swayed the worker delegates representing 27 unions to renew their adherence to revolutionary syndicalism.[69] He refuted the accusation that FOL had ignored political questions. He noted FOL had struggled against "oppressive laws", a point grudgingly acknowledged by socialists.[70] Ultimately, his argument on the need to maintain revolutionary syndicalism in order to avoid ideological sectarianism and to preserve working class unity carried the day.[71]

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[61] Pierre de L Boal, Chargé d' Affaires, ad interim to Secretary of State, September 1, 1927, U.S. Department of State Records, 823.00/539. This archive is herafter abbreviated to D.S.

[62] Subprefecto Pablo Palmo a Prefecto del Departamento, 16 de agosto de 1927, Ministerio del Interior Direccion del Gobierno. This archive is hereafter referred to as MI/DG.

[63] *El Constructor*, no.12, August 1925.

[64] *El Obrero en Madera*, no.5, June 1923, 3.

[65] *El Obrero Anarquista*, no.1, May 1926, 1.

[66] *Solidaridad*, quincena de October 1926, 1.

[67] Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in Lima-Callao were initially enthusiastic about the 1917 Russian Revolution. However, they became increasingly disillusioned, especially those associated with the *La Protesta* group, as news of Bolshevik persecution of Russian anarchists and the establishment of the New Soviet Political Economy became known. See, *La Protesta*, mayo de 1921, 1–2. On the initial rejection of this allegation, see, "Lamentable Error del Elemento Anarquista", *El Obrero Textil*, quincena de April 1924, 1.

[68] Kapsoli, *Mariátegui*, 35–36.

[69] Acta de la Cuarta Asamblea del Congreso Obrero Local", *Solidaridad*, primera quincena de febrero de 1927, no.15, 2. See also, Piedad Pareja, "Biografía de Arturo Sabroso Montoya", Lima: unpublished manuscript, n.d., 18.

[70] Kapsoli, *Mariátegui*, 114. The socialist intellectual, Ricardo Martínez de la Torre, a fierce critic of Sabroso and revolutionary syndicalism, acknowledged that FOL had fought against the Road Conscription and Vagrancy Laws. Martínez de la Torre, *Apuntes*, *VOL.* I, 251.

[71] Sabroso's position was not altogether different from José Carlos Mariátegui, the founder of Peru's Socialist

Ideological tensions within the union movement were temporarily put on hold, when, in June 1927 the Leguía regime arrested scores of labour leaders and activists of all political stripes and ideological orientations. Conflicts over ideology, party politics, and union autonomy would resurface with a vengeance in the early 1930s when the newly established Peruvian Communist Party and the social democratic, Peruvian Aprista Party vied for control of the labour movement.

Anarcho-syndicalism in Peru's southern highlands

In the southern highland region of Peru, comprising the Andean departments of Arequipa, Cuzco, and Puno, a loose but significant network of anarcho-syndicalist movements emerged in the late 1910s and 1920s. This network coincided with the expansion of Peru's wool export economy. The growth of the woollen trade between 1902 and 1924 fostered commercial links between the three departments and stimulated hacienda expansion, infrastructural improvements, and the development of urban economies in Arequipa and Cuzco. Contact between anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in southern Peru was facilitated by the completion of the Southern railway line in 1908 which connected the wool producing areas in Puno and Cuzco, with Mollendo, Arequipa's principal port. As the capital of the eponymous department and commercial centre of the southern regional economy, Arequipa became the focal point of the anarcho-syndicalist network in southern Peru.

The development of anarcho-syndicalism in Arequipa can be traced to the influence of four factors: 1) a radical liberal press 2) Lima's labour movement 3) immigrant anarchists and 4) cross-border ties with Chilean anarcho-syndicalists. Each of these factors will be taken up in turn. First, middle class intellectuals and artisans in the 1890s and early 1900s promoted a radical liberal discourse that offered a trenchant critique of Arequipa's aristocratic, conservative, and churchdominated society.

Inspired by Manuel González Prada, prominent Arequipeño liberal intellectuals and newspaper editors like Mariano Lino Urieta, Manuel Mostajo, Modesto Málaga, and Armando Quiroz Perea regularly denounced the oppressive and exploitative influence of oligarchic rule, religion, and capitalism.[72] Under their supervision radical newspapers like *El Ariete* ("The Battering Ram"), *Bandera Roja* ("Red Flag"), *El Volcán* ("The Volcano"), *Defensa Obrera* ("Worker Defense"), and *La Federación* ("The Federation") articulated local political issues and themes that would be taken up by Arequipa's anarcho-syndicalists.

Editorials and letters decrying "the tragedy of centralist tyranny" and demanding decentralization frequently appeared in these publications.[73] Calls for human redemption, workers' rights and dignity, and Indian emancipation were likewise de rigueur.[74] In addition, Arequipa's radical liberal press encouraged artisan and worker organisation in defence of their interests. In this way it served to engender a popular oppositional movement which was reflected in Arequipa's first major strikes in 1902, its first May Day celebration in 1906, and the formation of the Worker

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Party (1928), who also stressed the need to preserve proletarian unity. See, "Mensaje al Congreso Obrero", *Amauta*, no.5, January 1927, 35.

[72] David O. Wise, "La Consagración de González Prada: Maestro y Epigones, 1918– 1931", *Cuadernos Americanos*, 5, 1983, 145; Miguel Angel Urquieta, "González Prada y Urquieta", *Amauta*, no.5, 1927, 5.

[73] *El Volcán*, 22 July 1911; *La Federación*, 8 May 1915.

[74] See, for example, *La Bandera Roja*, 18 May and 28 July 1907; *La Defensa Obrera*, 21 November, *El Volcán*, 31 May, 1 July 1911; *La Federación*, 2 May 1916.

Social Centre of Arequipa (*Centro Social Obrero de Arequipa*, f.1905), the anarchist Cooperative and Savings Bank (*Cooperativa y Caja de Ahorros de Arequipa*, f.1912), and the class-based Worker Coalition of the Neighbourhoods, (*La Coalición Obrera de los Barrios*, f.1918) and Red Assistance (*Socorros Rojos*, f.1919).[75]

A second significant factor in catalyzing anarcho-syndicalist organisation and praxis in Arequipa was the influence of Lima's labour movement and to a lesser extent the labour movements in Argentina and Chile. The principles, goals, class struggles, and organisational structures of these relatively advanced movements served as a reference point for Arequipa's workers.

In December 1918, for example, artisans and workers cited news reports of an upsurge in proletarian struggles in Argentina, Chile, and Lima as the inspiration for organising the Society of Workers and Mutual Assistance (*Sociedad de Obreros y Socorros Mutuos*, SOSM), a class-oriented resistance society committed to a rejection of formal politics and adherence to the principle 'That the emancipation of workers should be the task of workers themselves.'[76] Two months later, taking its cue from Lima's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement, the SOSM launched a propaganda campaign to rally workers to enforce the eight hour day in Arequipa.

On July 21, 1919, Arequipa's principal labour organisations again followed Lima's lead by forming a *Comité Pro-Abaratamiento de las Subsistencias* to reduce the rising cost of food staples, rent, and utilities. Like Lima's *Comité* it presented local authorities with a list of demands and when these were ignored workers responded with a mass-based general strike. Arequipa's first general strike lasted eight days in early October and involved organised shoemakers, textile, mechanics, and transport workers affiliated with the *Comité* and commercial employees and railway workers of the British-owned Peruvian Corporation. Although the strike received tremendous popular support it yielded mixed results. Wage and benefit demands by Peruvian Corporation workers were granted but the *Comité*'s call for price reductions went unheeded. In the months following the general strike the *Comité* would hold mass demonstrations and continue to promote an anarcho-syndicalist agenda.[77]

In the wake of the 1919 general strike Arequipa's artisans and workers moved swiftly to build working-class organisations and labour federations. Ably assisted by anarcho-syndicalists linked to the *Socorros Rojos*, they founded Arequipa's first local labour federation, the Arequipa Worker Federation (*Federación Obrera Arequipeña*, or FOA), in 1921.[78] Dedicated to the expressed purpose of "looking out for the true interests of the working class", FOA counted among its affiliates organised railway workers and employees, transport workers, barbers, bakers, and other artisans.[79] Between 1919 and 1926 an array of resistance societies and labour unions were organised among bakers, tanners, shoemakers, printers, wood workers, railwaymen, and construction workers. These in turn were rapidly organised into sectoral and local labour federations.[80]

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[75] Raúl Fernández Llerena, *Los origenes del movimiento obrero en Arequipa: el partido liberal y el 1 de mayo de 1906*: Lima: Amauta/Tarea, 1984; Idem, *Arequipa: La jornada de las 8 horas, la primera huelga general*, Arequipa: 1983, 5 and 70; Víctor Colque Valladares, *Dinamica del movimiento syndical en Arequipa, 1900–1968,* Lima: PUCP, Estudios Sindicales #4, 1976.

[76] Fernández Llerena, *Arequipa: La jornada de las 8 horas*, viii–x; Héctor Ballón Lozada, *Cien años de vida política de Arequipa, 1890–1990*, tomo II, Arequipa, Perú: UNSA, Talleres Gráficos Flores Villalba, 1992, 29.

[77] Fernández Llerena, *La jornada de las 8 horas*, 70 and *passim*.

[78] Ibid., 75.

[79] Archivo Departmental de Arequipa Prefectura, Vicente Salas, secretaria de correspondencia, Federación Obrera Arequipeña, to Prefecto del Depto., 4 de mayo de 1921. This archive is hereafter referred to as ADA/PFT.

[80] Among the most important new labour organisations were: *Confederación Ferrocarrilera Obrera del Sur* (1919),

This upsurge in labour organisation corresponded to FORP's 1919 call for Peruvian workers to form unions and federations in order to enhance their capacity for direct action against capitalists and the State.[81] With the establishment of a regional federation, the Local Worker Federation of Arequipa (*Federación Obrera Local de Arequipa*, FOLA), modelled after FOL-Lima in 1926, a clear symmetry emerged between the Arequipa and Lima anarcho-syndicalist oriented labour movements. Indeed, FOLA's stated priority to achieve the "integral unification of all workers" in the pursuit of "liberty and justice" reflected the orientation of FOL-Lima.[82]

Like its counterpart in Lima, Arequipa's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement utilized direct and indirect action in the pursuit of immediate and long range goals. For example, in October 1923, labour organisations in Arequipa staged protests and work stoppages against a hike in passenger and freight tariffs on railways owned by the British-owned Peruvian Corporation. SOSM and the Tailors' Union (*Unión de Sastres*) pointed to the imperialist character of the Peruvian Corporation and denounced it for "sucking the blood of the people". At the same time, they sought to enlist the support of Arequipa's Chamber of Commerce. Ultimately, sufficient pressure was brought to bear to compel the Peruvian government to intervene to suspend the price hike.[83]

Two years later the labour movement launched a general strike, the anarcho-syndicalist weapon par excellence, to demand the Peruvian government repeal the despised *Ley Conscripción Vial* (Road Conscription Law), which required adult males to register and to work on State infrastructure projects for upwards of twelve days per year.[84] This strike is examined in more detail below. Suffice it to say, the general strike was spearheaded by the Popular Worker Assembly (*Asamblea Obrera-Popular*) an ad hoc umbrella organisation comprising the major anarcho-syndicalist organisations in Arequipa and coordinated with FOL-Lima.[85] The government viewed the Popular Worker Assembly as a subversive organisation of "agitators". Its ties to FOL-Lima and Chilean IWW elements undoubtedly reinforced this perception.[86] Following the December 1925 general strike the government sought to arrest affiliated labour leaders even though it could not readily identify assembly leaders because it "had no active president but conforms to an anarchist regime".[87]

The combativeness and manifest class consciousness of Arequipa's labour movement belied its relatively small size and incipient character. Arequipa had only 45,000 inhabitants in 1925

Federación de Zapateros (1919), *Federación de Trabajadores en el Ramo de Construcción* (1923), *Confederación de Tranviarios y Electricistas* (1924), *Sindicato de Trabajadores en Madera* (1925?), *Federación de Empleados de Comercio y la Industria* (1926).

[81] Martínez de la Torre, *Apuntes*, VOL. I, 59.

[82] ADA/PFT, Francisco Ramos, secretaria de actas F.O.L.A. a Presidente de la Sociedad de Unión Empleados, 8 de abril de 1926.

[83] *La Voz del Sur*, 6 de octubre de 1923. See, also, José Luis Rénique, *El movimiento descentralista arequipeño y la crisis del '30*. Lima: Taller de Estudios Políticos, CCSS, Universidad Católica del Perú, 1979, 10.

[84] President August B. Leguía signed Law 4113 on May 10, 1920 authorizing The Road Conscription Act. It obligated adult males, ages 18–60, to repair and construct roads, bridges, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and railway lines for a prescribed number of days annually in accordance with one's age. Workers were to be paid a daily wage determined by each region.

[85] ADA/PFT, Enrique Lozada, jefe de la sección de investigaciónes a Prefectura e Intendencia de Arequipa, 30 de diciembre de 1925.

[86] ADA/PFT, Coronel Prefecto de Arequipa a Ministerio de Gobierno y Guerra, 27 de diciembre 1925; Fernández Llerena, La jornada de 8 horas, x and 75.

[87] ADA/PFT, Teniente Comandante Accidental del Cuerpo de Seguridad a Prefecto del Depto., 28 de diciembre de 1925.

and lacked a dynamic industrial sector. Nevertheless, the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement extended its reach beyond workers employed in the dozens of artisan workshops, 19 commercial enterprises, and 15 industrial establishments.[88]

Emulating Lima's labour movement, Arequipa's resistance societies and labour unions cultivated organic links to the broad popular sectors. By sponsoring grass-roots level worker libraries, theatre groups, and sports clubs, they sought to achieve two primary objectives: 1) the promotion of worker solidarity and 2) workers' socio-cultural emancipation.[89] A case in point was the streetcar conductor and employees' union and its patronage of the Tranelec soccer club. As an extension of the union, which was affiliated with the Popular Worker Assembly, Tranelec would be enlisted to join direct actions in defence of working-class interests such as the protests against the *Ley Conscripción Vial*.[90]

The promotion of a ritual calendar of events by Arequipa's anarchosyndicalist labour movement likewise paralleled developments in Lima. In addition to May Day festivities, celebrations were held to commemorate the foundation of workers' organisations. Tributes to fallen working-class martyrs were also organised. On January 30 annual tributes in honour of the "memory of the immolated victims of the 30 of January 1915" were sponsored by the Workers' Societies of Arequipa.[91] This well-attended event recalled the mass protest against economic austerity measures in Arequipa's main plaza and the brutal massacre of 13 workers by gendarmes and police. Ritual events like this reminded workers of the class bias and repressive character of the State and fostered working-class solidarity.

The influence of immigrant anarchists constituted a third factor in the spread of anarcho-syndicalist ideology and organisation in Arequipa. Foremost among these immigrants was Ramón Rusiñol, a Spanish architect and self-proclaimed anarcho-syndicalist, who arrived in Arequipa in 1919. A dedicated and indefatigable promoter of anarchosyndicalist doctrine, Rusiñol instructed workers from his office in Barrio Antiquilla in central Arequipa. By dint of his prodigious proselytizing activity, Rusiñol transformed Barrio Antiquilla into a libertarian space where militant worker groups and anarcho-syndicalist labour leaders gathered, socialized, and were trained.[92]

Jacinto Liendo and Francisco Ramos, two of his devoted students, emerged as prominent anarcho-syndicalist labour leaders in the mid1920s. Liendo, a typographer, served as leader of the combative Popular Worker Assembly. Ramos, a tailor, served as the secretary of *actas* for FOLA. Rusiñol also mentored a coterie of university students in anarchism who in turn were anointed to carry "the light of knowledge" to Arequipa's worker and artisan organisations.[93] Before his arrest for alleged subversive activities and deportation to the island of Taquila in 1927,

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[88] Ramón Gutiérrez, *Evolución Histórica Urbana de Arequipa (1540–1990)*, Lima: Epígrafe S.A., 1992, 175 and 209. Manuel Zevallos Vera, *Arequipa Historia de su Modernidad, 1540–2002*, Lima: Fondo Editorial Universidad Alas Peruanas, 2002, 25–28.

[89] The Coalición Obrera de los Barrios founded a workers' library to promote workers' self-education. See, *La Voz del Sur*, 21 January 1922.

[90] ADA/PFT, Nicanor F. Ordoñez, secretaria general de Asamblea Popular a Presidente Taneles {sic} Foot-ball y Socorros Mutuos, 28 de diciembre, 1925.

[91] ADA/PFT, Carlos Gómez Sánchez a Prefecto de Depto., 20 de enero de 1922.

[92] Antero Peralta Vásquez, *La Faz Oculta de Arequipa*, Arequipa: Impreso de Talleres Gráficos de la Cooperativa de Producción y Trabajo Universitaria, 1977, 212–214 and Ricardo Temoche Benites, *Cofradías, Gremios, Mutuales y Sindicatos en el Perú*, Lima: Editorial Escuela Nueva S.A., 1988, 429–433.

[93] Peralta Vásquez, *La Faz*, 214.

he founded a Popular University. Staffed by anarchist students associated with *Humanidad*, a weekly organ of "free students", the Popular University sought to foster workers' integral education. Both Rusiñol and the anarchist students advocated workers' self-improvement and utilized the locals of the *Sociedad Obrera I Socorros Mutuos, Coalición Obrera de los Barrios*, and *Sociedad de Panaderos I Constructores* (Society of Bakers & Builders) to hold their Popular University classes.[94]

European immigrants were not the only foreigners to promote anarcho-syndicalism in Arequipa. For example, Manuel B. Rodas, a Bolivian textile worker, actively sought to organise Arequipeño factory workers along anarcho-syndicalist lines. Between 1916 and 1922 Rodas worked in the La Industrial Huaico, a relatively large textile factory with over 200 workers in Arequipa's fledgling manufacturing sector. Apparently with some assistance from Rusiñol, Rodas encouraged workers at La Industrial Huaico to organise a union and to pursue direct action tactics to improve wages and work conditions. It wasn't long before Rodas's propaganda and labour organising activities stirred the M. Forga and Sons, the factory owners, to action. In the wake of a strike by Huaico workers on October 20, 1922, M. Forga and Sons implemented a company lockout, denied recognition of the workers' union organisation, and petitioned the prefect of Arequipa to expel Rodas. The owners cannily played on xenophobic prejudices and the threat of subversion in their appeal to the prefect: "[Rodas] is one of the principal promoters of the strike. This individual is of Bolivian nationality and consequently his expulsion as a dangerous element to public order is prescribed by the law." The prefect sided with the owners despite the pleas by Huaico worker delegates that Rodas was unjustly severed from his job and was merely the treasurer of their mutualist organisation.[95]

Rodas's expulsion in 1922 however did not prevent textile workers at Huaico from establishing an anarcho-syndicalist union. In 1926 the Huaico Textile Union (*Unión Textil del Huaico*) adopted the IWW-inspired slogan, "One for All and All for One" and warned workers against "living in isolation and resignedly suffering [sic] capitalist oppression".[96] Living up to its creed, the Huaico Textile Union pursued worker solidarity and pressed for improvements in wages and work conditions throughout the 1920s.

Cross-border contacts with Chilean workers affiliated with the IWW constituted another key factor in the spread of anarcho-syndicalism in Arequipa. Initially Chilean IWW activists sought to develop close ties with Lima's anarcho-syndicalist movement. This largely took the form of infrequent communiqués and the distribution of propaganda. In 1922, for example, Luis Armando Triviño, a prominent Chilean IWW leader published a series of articles in *La Protesta* extolling the virtues of IWW organisation and methods and issued a call for "solidarity with an international reach".[97]

Though some individual workers were undoubtedly influenced by this appeal, there is little evidence that Lima's labour movement was meaningfully affected.[98] In contrast, Arequipa's labour

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[94] Ibid., 215 and *La Voz del Sur*, 23 June 1923.

[95] ADA/PFT, Luque, et al. to Prefecto del Departmento, 23 de octubre de 1922; ADA/PFT, M. Forga é Hijos a Prefecto del Departmento, 3 de noviembre de 1922.

[96] *Reglamento de la Unión Textil del Huaico*, 15 de setiembre de 1926.

[97] *La Protesta*, March 1922, 8.

[98] There is some evidence for IWW influence on Callao's dockworkers. And, in Lima, at least one worker clearly identified with the IWW, V. Racchumi, a baker. He disseminated IWW doctrine. For example, see his editorial "Reflexión" published in the Mexican labour press, *El Proletario*, Nogales, Sonora, 30 September 1922. Thanks to David Struthers for drawing my attention to this document.

movement, especially employees and port workers in Mollendo, were profoundly influenced by their interactions with Chilean Wobblies. Unlike their counterparts in Lima, workers in Arequipa had more direct and substantive contacts with Chilean IWW activists during the 1920s.

It is difficult to pinpoint precisely when, given the fragmentary evidence, the Chilean IWW maritime workers made their first contact with Peruvian port workers in Mollendo. Certainly by early 1925 close ties were established. Chilean IWW crews abroad the steamships Mapocho and Cachapoal, which were owned and operated by the South American Steamship Company, reportedly held secret meetings under the cover of darkness with Peruvian workers in an abandoned house on Islay Street.[99] On March 24, 1925, the *Voz del Mar*, (Voice of the Sea), an IWW organ based in Valparaiso, hailed the formation "in Mollendo of a local of the IWW".

The establishment of an IWW presence in Mollendo appears to have taken place in the aftermath of a triumphant general strike by maritime workers and railwaymen between February 18 and 25. According to Peruvian delegates of the "Associations of the Sea" (the *Agrupaciones del Mar*) in Mollendo the strike was sparked by the capricious and unjustified dismissal of three storage workers by managers of the British-owned Peruvian Corporation. In a communiqué dated March 8, the delegates expressed their gratitude to the "distinguished comrades of Mapocho and Cachapoal and the labour "Central of Valparaiso" and "all the brothers of the coast of Chile" for their solidarity. They characterized Peru as a "country in which the [Anglo] Saxons dominate and seek to silence the voice of the worker with terror". The communiqué concluded with an affirmation of their support for the IWW: "the unification of workers is our primary desire, because the one who lives by sweat and the fatigue of labour, shouldn't recognize boundaries or flags, and for this, we will not separate ourselves from the I.W.W. which we consider the greatest tree in the world".[100]

Peruvian security forces often noted with alarm working-class internationalism and the rejection of national divisions by southern workers. In a report entitled "About the Bolshevik International Society Y.W.W". [sic.], one security agent warned the prefect of Arequipa of a seditious "theory" propounded by Octavio Manrique, president of the Confederation of Railway Workers of the South. He observed that Manrique had called on workers to recognize that "in terms of workers' home, there exists neither country nor class rivalry".[101] That many Arequipeñan workers shared this view marked an extraordinary advance in class consciousness.[102] All the more so, given Peru's longstanding border dispute with Chile and the concerted efforts by both national governments to whip up patriotic fervour.[103]

For Peruvian authorities the "Bolshevik" influence of the IWW in the strategic port of Mollendo was intolerable. Senator Bedoya of Arequipa demanded that stern measures be taken in a fiery speech to the Peruvian congress. He insisted that "Chileans and other foreigners had implanted the virus of Bolshevism in Mollendo, and that the government ought to exterminate them in

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[99] ADA/PFT, Subprefecto de la Provincia Islay a General Prefecto de Depto., 1 de junio de 1925.

[100] ADA/PFT, De la "Voz del Mar" 24 de Marzo de 1925.

[101] ADA/PFT, Cuerpo de Seguridad 12a Compañía Comandancia al General Prefecto, 19 de mayo de 1925.

[102] Ballón Lozada cites a letter to *El Deber*, an Arequipa daily, on 20 April 1925, in which the Federación Local de Sociedades Obreras repudiated the paper's allegations that railway workers were anti-patriotic by boldly asserting, "If capitalists engage in solidarity without taking account of borders or flags, how strange is it that workers from both sides, with a superior morality, engage in solidarity and unite?". Ballón Lozada, *Cien años de vida*, tomo II, 32.

[103] Following the War of the Pacific (1879–1883) Peru and Chile disputed ownership of the former Peruvian provinces of Tacna and Arica. The territorial conflict was not resolved until 1929. See, William E. Skuban, *Lines in the Sand: Nationalism and Identity on the Peruvian-Chilean Frontier*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007.

order to assure national tranquillity".[104] No sooner had he uttered those sentiments than on May 4, security forces deported Octavio Manrique and another radical leader of the railway workers, and forced several known IWW propagandists to escape to Chile.[105]

Despite these actions, the subprefect of the province of Islay warned of the persistence of "subversive" leaders and ideas within Mollendo's Maritime Workers' Union.[106] This warning proved prophetic. In January and early February 1926 four to five hundred stevedores staged a series of protests and work stoppages over wages and the use of non-union workers to unload cargo.[107] Rising tensions between the port's Customs Authority and dock workers prompted one worker to physically assault the head of the Mollendo Agencies & Co., who was responsible for unloading regulations.[108] Prior to this incident, on January 14, Raúl Alejando Nuñez Gómez and his brother Julio Fernando, radical lawyers and directors of *La Escoba* ("The Broom"), an anarchist paper, were said to have instigated a mass protest against the municipal government.

According to the subprefect, the aim of the movement was to discredit city officials and to undermine their authority by causing workers' councils to break off relations with the government.[109] Against this backdrop, on February 8, the Peruvian government sent two naval warships to Mollendo to restore order. Still, worker unrest continued. The captain of the port reported another work stoppage by stevedores on February 23 and called for "the Bolsheviks that sustain the terror in Mollendo to be deported".[110] In early March the prefect of Arequipa had *La Escoba* suppressed and twelve known subversives including the Nuñez Gómez brothers, a customs official, and nine dock workers arrested and transferred to Lima.[111]

State repression aimed at disarticulating the Mollendo labour movement and neutralizing IWW, anarchist, and communist influence among Arequipeñan workers intensified in the late 1920s. In September 1927, a presidential supreme resolution instructed all prefects to "impede undesirable elements from distributing propaganda based on dissociative doctrines". It also ordered prefects to establish registers for both national and foreign propagandists and troublemakers. These and other repressive measures seem to have severed ties between Chilean Wobblies and Arequipeñan workers. Nevertheless, anarchist and IWW doctrines continued to inform the labour movements in Mollendo and Arequipa. The use of direct action, demands for social justice, expressions of working-class solidarity, and denunciations of bourgeois capitalism would remain staples of Mollendo and Arequipa worker organisations into the early 1930s and beyond.[112]

As noted earlier the spread of anarcho-syndicalism to Arequipa formed part of a broader regional pattern that encompassed Peru's southern highland departments of Cuzco and Puno. An-

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[104] Miles Poindexter to Secretary of State, May 4, 1925, 832.0/508; ADA/PFT, Subprefecto de la Provincia Islay a General Prefecto del Depto., 1 de junio de 1925.

[105] ADA/PFT, Cuerpo de Seguridad 12a Compania Comandancia al General Prefecto, 19 de mayo de 1925.

[106] ADA/PFT, Subprefecto de la Provincia Islay a General Prefecto del Depto., 1 de junio de 1925.

[107] Miles Poindexter to Secretary of State, February 8, 1926, D.S., 823.50545/46,.

[108] ADA/PFT, Centro Social Obrero de la Confederación Coaligada de la Provincia de Islay a Subprefecto, 28 de enero de 1926.

[109] ADA/PFT, Subprefectura de Islay/Mollendo a Prefecto del Depto., 16 de marzo de 1926.

[110] ADA/PFT, Capitan del Puerto al Coronel Prefecto de Arequipa, 23 de febrero de 1926.

[111] ADA/PFT, Capitan del Puerto al Subprefecto de Islay, 2 de marzo de 1926.

[112] See, for example, ADA/PFT, Subprefecto de Islay a Prefecto de Depto., 15 de diciembre 1930. Evidence of the persistence of anarchist influence can be seen in the library holdings of the *Sociedad de Obreros y Socorros Mutuos* which were catalogued by police after a raid on its headquarters in June 17, 1931. The library included scores of anarchist writings by Malatesta, Kropotkin, Arreta, Reclus, and others. See, ADA/ PFT, Cuerpo de Investigación y Vigilancia Sección Arequipa a Prefecto del Depto., 17 de junio de 1931.

archist ideas began to circulate in Cuzco in the first decade of the 20ᵗʰ century. Lima's anarchist press and the writings of Manuel González Prada penetrated Cuzco, the remote former capital of the Inca Empire.[113]

By all accounts anarchist thought initially resonated with Cuzco's dissident intellectuals. Luis Velasco Aragón, Julio Luna Pacheco, Humberto Pacheco, Edmundo Delgado Vivanco, Roberto Latorre, Luis Yábar Palacios, Manuel Jesús Urbina, and Angel Gasco were the leading exponents of anarchism in Cuzco. Perhaps the most influential intellectual of this group was Velasco Aragón. A disciple of Manuel González Prada, Velasco Aragón founded and directed the *Centro Manuel González Prada* and the anarchist literary and artistic society, *Capa y Espada* (Cape and Sword) in the early 1920s.[114] Inspired by European anarchist publications and anarchist pamphlets from Buenos Aires, he also disseminated handbills endorsing workers' economic demands and social revolution.[115] He gained national notoriety in April 1923 for a blistering speech entitled "*La verdad sobre el Fango*" ("The Truth of the Shameful Mire"), denouncing political and judicial corruption, militarism, and landlord abuses under Leguía's dictatorship before cheering throngs of Cuzqueños. For this public incitement and his anarchist activities, Velasco Aragón would be arrested and imprisoned for one year.[116]

Roberto Latorre, the owner and editor of *Kosko*, a countercultural magazine, would see to it that anarchist ideas remained a part of Cuzco's public discourse during the mid-1920s. *Kosko* routinely reprinted articles by González Prada and offered tributes in his honour.[117] Latorre himself published editorials in praise of anarchism and publicly praised the works of Kropotkin and Malatesta.[118] He and Velasco Aragón would also publish articles in *Kuntur*, a radical polemical and literary magazine that appeared in 1927.[119] The previous year, *Pututo*, a short-lived experimental magazine was launched by a group of radical *cuzqueno* intellectuals and it too offered tributes to González Prada.[120] An offshoot of these publishing endeavors was the formation of a radical study group known as "*El Falansterio*". The group took its name from the French libertarian socialist, Charles Fourier's concept of a Phalanx, a small voluntary community based on communal property. The group held meetings at the home of Rafael Tupayachi, an Indian intellectual, who served as the first general secretary and instructor in Cuzco's Popular University of González Prada in May 1924.[121] An outgrowth of the 1920 university reform movement, Cuzco's Popular University provided another forum for workers to become exposed to anarchist

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[113] José Deustua and José Luis Rénique, *Intelectuales, indigenismo y descentralismo en el Perú 1897–1931*, Cusco: Debates Andinos 4, Centro de Estudios Rurales Anindos "Bartolome de Las Casas, 1984, 42.

[114] "En Homenaje a La Memoria de Gonzales Prada", *El Sol*, 24 July 1923. See also, Ferdinand Cuadros Villena, *La vertiente cusqueña del comunismo peruano*, Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1990, 64.

[115] Velasco Aragón accumulated a vast collection of anarchist tracts and publications from Europe and Argentina. His collection housed at the Universidad Nacional, contains titles from Kropotkin, Proudhon, et al.

[116] Luis Velasco Aragón, *La verdad sobre el fango, 22 de abril de 1923*, Cuzco: Imprenta H.G. Rozas, 1923. On the popular approbation of his speech and his subsequent arrest for promoting social revolution, see, Sergio Caller, *Rostros y rastros, Un caminante cusqueño en el siglo xx*, Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 2006, 64–65, and Julio Guiterrez, *Así Nació Cuzco Rojo: Contribución a su historia política: 1924–1934*, Lima: Empresa Humboldt Nicolás Dueñas, 1988, 21.

[117] José Tamayo Herrera, *El Cusco del Oncenio: Un ensayo de historia regional a través de la fuente de la Revista "Kosko"*, Lima: Universidad de Lima, Cuadernos de Historia VIII, 1989, 28.

[118] Ibid., 110.

[119] José Carlos Gutiérrez Samanez, *La Generación Cusqueña de 1927*, Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 2007, 65.

[120] Gutiérrez, *Así Nació*, 25.

[121] Caller, *Rostros y Rastros*, 162; "La Universidad Popular", *El Sol*, 14 de mayo de 1924.

and anarcho-syndicalist thought. Many university instructors were openly sympathetic to anarchism. These included intellectuals such as Humberto Pacheco, Erasmo Delgado Vivanco, Luis Villa, and Genaro Baca, and Ricardo Santos from a working-class background.[122] The latter, a carpenter, was an outspoken proponent of anarcho-syndicalism. Adopting the slogan "Truth, Justice, Liberty" and committed to fostering solidarity between intellectuals and workers, Cuzco's Popular University received the enthusiastic support of the city's artisan guilds and workers' organisations. From its inception the university enrolled "no less than 100 students".[123]

Despite the activism of pro-anarchist intellectuals and groups, Cuzco's labouring class only gradually and rather fitfully adopted anarchosyndicalist organisation and methods. Undoubtedly the slow growth of Cuzco's consumer industries, which were based mainly on artisanal production until the establishment of textile and beer factories in 1918 and the early 1920s, and the small size of the urban proletariat were inhibiting factors.[124] Nevertheless, in October 1919, textile and railway workers undertook strike actions signalling the emergence of a new class outlook and a commitment to direct action.[125]

Concurrently, Cuzco's major artisan societies and worker organisations founded a Local Workers' Federation of Cuzco (FOLC) modelled after FORP.[126] FOLC established formal ties with FORP and later FOL-Lima but only survived until 1923.[127] Notwithstanding its short duration, FOLC's influence should not be dismissed.[128] By 1922 it had succeeded in organising a May Day celebration based on the ideals of the First International. The May Day program announced in the daily newspaper *El Sol* reminded workers that "The conquest of the legitimate rights that correspond to workers and their welfare ... must come from the efforts and the direct action of worker organisation, the emancipation of workers must be the task of the workers themselves". It also rejected formal politics declaring that "in each election campaign the worker is victim of deception and fraud".[129]

To strengthen working class unity and organisation in Cuzco, FOLC's publication, *Obrero Andino* ("The Andean Worker"), called for a Worker Congress to be held at the departmental level. It indicated the stated goal of the congress would be to "provide the basis for the resurgence of the Peruvian proletariat and defend its forces, prerogatives, its rights and privileges". The congress never took place.[130] But FOLC's anarchosyndicalist message did not go unheeded. In 1924 Ri-

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[122] José Carlos Gutiérrez Samanez, personal communication, August 25, 2008. See, also Tamayo Herrera, *El Cuzco del Oncenio*, 65–66, 68.

[123] "La Universidad Popular y la Solidaridad Estudiantil Obrera", *El Sol*, 9 de abril de 1924; "La Universidad Popular", *El Sol*, 14 May 1924; "La Universidad Popular Gonzales Prada", *El Sol*, 2 June 1924.

[124] Reliable statistics on Cuzco's working-class for the period are unavailable. Given that the provincial population numbered approximately 37,000 in 1920, it is fair to say the size of the urban working class was quite small. The bulk of the wage labour force was employed in small printing, leather, wood, shoe, bakery, beverage, and mechanic shops and plants. Construction and transport workers also were important segments of wage labour force.

[125] Rossano Calvo C.*, El Sol 100 años: Periodismo e Historia Local El Diario "El Sol" de Cusco (1900–1950)*, Cuzco: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 2002, 69.

[126] For FORP's influence on Cuzco's labour movement see, Augusto Sarmiento, Eduardo Garcia, Ladislau Valdiesu, interview by Robert J. Alexander, Cuzco, June 8, 1947.

[127] "El próximo congreso obrero departmental", *El Sol,* 22 de marzo de 1922; José Carlos Gutiérrez Samanez, personal communication, August 25, 2008.

[128] Krüeggler stresses FOLC's transitory character and minimizes its influence. See, Thomas Krüeggler, "Indians, Workers, and the Arrival of 'Modernity': Cuzco, Peru (1895–1924)", *The Americas*, 56:22, October 1999, 185.

[129] "En homenaje a los Trabajadores del Cuzco", *El Sol*, 1 May 1922.

[130] It's unknown why the congress failed to materialize. However, it's important to note that FOLC explicitly

cardo Santos, Martín Pareja, and Manuel Castro founded an anarchist organisation for fellow artisan workers.[131] By the mid-1920s Cuzco's labour movement had irreversibly shifted away from mutualist and guild organisation toward resistance societies and class-oriented unions.[132]

In addition to urban labour the influence of anarcho-syndicalism extended to the indigenous peasantry in the rural areas of Cuzco and Puno. The principle porters of anarcho-syndicalism in these areas were provincial migrants. During the 1910s and 1920s internal migration intensified in Peru with a steady flow of migrants travelling back and forth between Puno, Cuzco, and Lima as well as between Puno, Cuzco, and Arequipa.[133]

For many southern provincial migrants, contact with Lima's anarchists and anarcho-syndicalist labour movement profoundly shaped their political thinking and activism. Carlos Condorena (a.k.a. Carlos Condori Yujra), an indigenous peasant from Puno, for example, developed close ties with anarcho-syndicalist leaders and read European and Peruvian publications on anarcho-syndicalism while in Lima in the early 1910s.[134] Soon after, he became a leader within the Tahuantinsuyo Pro-Indian Rights Central Committee (*Comité Central Pro-Derecho Indigena Tahuantinsuyo*, or CPIT) which was founded in 1919 by provincial émigrés residing in Lima and supported by anarcho-syndicalists.[135] Before his imprisonment in Puno in 1925, he championed indigenous labour organisation and the struggle for the eight-hour day.[136]

Provincial migrants played vital roles as both interlocutors for the CPIT and indigenous peasants and as intermediaries between them and the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement. Notable figures in this regard were Ezequiel Urviola, Hipólito Salazar, and Francisco Chuquiwanka Ayulo. Urviola, a *quechua* speaking "Indian-Mestizo" from Azángaro, Puno, epitomized the synthesis of an indigenous and anarcho-syndicalist sensibility.[137] Driven from Puno by *gamonales* (rural bosses) for organising indigenous self-defence organisations, Urviola would ultimately wind up in Lima in 1920 where he collaborated with the CPIT, the union movement, and the Popular University González Prada.[138]

Urviola's heterodox views were evident in all three areas of collaboration. To textile workers and students in the Popular University he expressed an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist outlook; one student recalled how he repeated slogans like "get back bourgeois pigs" and "down with Yankee imperialism".[139] Another issue he addressed with workers was the importance of taking

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proscribed artisan capitalists from participation in the congress. See, "El Próximo Congreso Obrero Departamental", *El Sol*, 22 March 1922.

[131] Cuadros, *La vertiente cusqueña*, 64–65.

[132] Class-oriented unions were founded by textile workers, chauffeurs, and carpenters. Shoemakers withdrew from the Artisan Society and adopted a classist line.

[133] On the intensity of provincial migration to Lima between 1920 and 1940, see, Roque García Frías, "Intensidad absoluta y relative de la emigración provinciana aldepartamento de Lima", *Estadística Peruana*, VOL.3, no.5, (July 1947), 57.

[134] José Luis Ayala, *Yo Fui Canillita de José Carlos Mariátegui (Auto) Biografía de Mariano Larico Yujra*, Lima: Kollao, Editorial Periodistica, 1990, 87, 119, 137–138; Carlos Arroyo, "La experiencia del Comité Central Pro-Derecho Indígena Tahuantinsuyo", *E.I.A.L.*, 15:1, (January–June 2004), 188.

[135] *Tahuantinsuyo* refers to the Inca Empire and is a Quechua term meaning 'land of the four quarters.'

[136] Ayala, *Yo Fui Canillita*, 137.

[137] Urviola was a *mestizo* but self-identified as an Indian. He adopted their language, dress, and culture. The term"el indio-mestizo" to describe Urviola is used by José Luis Rénique, *La batalla por Puno: conflicto agrario y nación en los andes peruanos*, Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2004, 93.

[138] Urviola initially took up refuge in Arequipa and studied at the National University of San Agustín. Eventually he established contact with Rusiñol and other anarchist sympathizers. See Ballón Lozada, *Cien años de vida política*, 29.

[139] Ayala, *Yo Fui Canillita*, 140–141.

pride in the indigenous race and the Inca past.[140] Along with his fellow *puneños*, Salazar and Ayulo, both leaders in the CPIT, he opposed the influence of the Catholic Church and advocated rationalist education and schools for Indians.[141]

He also insisted on indigenous peasants and workers' self-emancipation and rejected state paternalism, an anarchist conviction he sought to imprint on the CPIT and the Peruvian Regional Indian Worker Federation (*Federación Indígena Obrera Regional Peruana*, FIORP), an indigenous labour federation founded in 1923. Urviola clearly bridged the divide between provincial indigenous peasants and the urban-based anarcho-syndicalist labour movement. On the occasion of his death in 1925, he was lionized by anarchist labour unions, the CPIT, and indigenous groups.[142]

Under the leadership of Urviola, Salazar, and Ayulo, the CPIT and the FIORP, while not anarcho-syndicalist organisations per se, fostered anarcho-syndicalist ideology, organisation, and tactics among the indigenous peasantry.[143] Indeed, a dramatic upsurge in peasant revolts in Puno and Cuzco in the early 1920s was viewed by landowners, *gamonales*, and the government as the work of the CPIT and FIORP, which never sought to conceal their aim to educate, organise, and emancipate the indigenous peasants.[144] That these organisations promoted a class and internationalist outlook, peasant-worker solidarity, direct action, and ethnic pride, was not lost on their adversaries. Official tolerance for FIORP and the CPIT ended in 1924 and 1927 respectively. Both organisations would suffer repression. Francisco Gamarra Navarro and Paulino Aguilar, anarcho-syndicalist leaders of the FIORP, would be deported to Bolivia where they would assist in the formation of Bolivia's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement.[145]

Government attempts to repress anarchist networks in the south and to sever their ties with Lima's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement were never entirely successful. This was due in large part to the loose, flexible, and decentralized nature of these networks. It also was a result of state policies that galvanized anarchist-inspired worker, peasant, and indigenous opposition throughout the southern highlands and in the nation's capital. Leguía's decision to enact the *Ley Conscripción Vial* in 1920 and to insist on its application for the duration of his presidency aroused anarchist passions against state oppression and coerced labour.[146] The Road Construction Act as it was euphemistically called had the effect of inspiring a permanent anarchist-coordinated anti-Conscription movement in the 1920s.

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[140] Wilfredo Kapsoli, *Ayllus del sol: anarquismo y utopia andina*, Lima: TAREA, 1984, 152.

[141] Of the three Ayulo was the most outspoken advocate of autonomous rationalist schools for Indians. See, Ricardo Melgar Bao, *Sindicalismo y milenarismo en la region andina del perú (1920–1931)*, Cuernavaca, México: Ediciones Cuicuilco, Escuela Nacional de Antropologia e Historia, 1988, 36.

[142] Kapsoli, *Ayllus*, 138–139.

[143] Between the CPIT and FIORP, the latter more clearly reflected an anarchosyndicalist structure and orientation. Indeed, José Carlos Mariátegui, the founder of the Peruvian Socialist Party (1928) observed that FIORP was committed to organising Indians according to 'anarcho-syndicalist principles and methods' in order to achieve a social revolution. See José Carlos Mariátegui, *Ideologia y Política*, Lima: Biblioteca Amauta, 1987, 41–42.

[144] For an analysis of the Indian-peasant uprisings in Puno see, Augusto Ramos Zambrano, *Tormenta Antiplanica (Rebeliones Indígenas de la Provincia de Lampa, Puno, 1920–1924)*, Lima: n., 1990, and Melgar Bao, *Sindicalismo*, 45–47. César Levano points out that FIORP had links to the peasant revolt in Lauramarca hacienda in Cuzco in 1924, see, Caller, *Rostros y Rastros*, 34; See also, Arturo Aranda Arrieta and Maria Escalante, *Lucha de clases en el movimiento syndical cusqueño, 1927–1965*, Lima: G. Herrera Editores, 1978, 65.

[145] See, Zulema Lehm A. and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Los artesanos libertarios y la ética del trabajo*, La Paz, Bolivia: THOA, 1988, 108, footnote 39.

[146] See footnote 13.

Overt resistance to the *Ley Conscripción Vial* erupted in 1923. Leaders of the CPIT in the southern provinces encouraged indigenous peasant uprisings. In a thinly veiled reference to the CPIT, Pedro José Rada y Gama, the Minister of Government and Police, attributed the revolts in Pomabamba, Huanta, Pampas, Aganares, Chiquián, Anta y La Mar, to "known agitators that make them [Indians] believe that the laws of the Road Conscription and other acts of the municipalities profoundly discriminate against their interests".[147]

Since the first National Indian Congress at Tahuantinsuyo in 1921, Lima's anarchist press and anarcho-syndicalist delegates had admonished Indians not to accept State impositions such as obligatory military service and labour exactions.[148] By 1923 it did not require much convincing as local authorities and *gamonales* routinely abused the *Conscripción Vial* employing Indians 24 days or more, in violation of the prescribed 6 day obligation.[149] That same year, the Third National Indian Congress of the CPIT, under the leadership of the indigenous anarcho-syndicalist, Ezequiel Urviola, who served as general secretary, called for the abolition of the *Conscripción Vial*.[150] Even as the Congress was in session uprisings flashed across Cuzco and Puno. District authorities had to suspend the *Conscripción Vial* in several Cuzco provinces in 1924 because of Indian resistance.[151] FIORP, though debilitated by state repression, continued to urge Cusqueño Indians in 1925 to organise and to combat injustices in the name of "indigenous proletarian redemption".[152]

Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalist organisations in Arequipa also led a campaign to repeal the *Conscripción Vial*. In December 1925 Factor Lama, Francisco Ramos, and Miguel Aguilar of the Popular Assembly organised a three day general strike to this end. To break the strike and attendant mass demonstrations in central Arequipa, the prefect deployed police and gendarmes resulting in many wounded protesters and the death of at least one worker. The excessive brutality by security forces prompted the city mayor and the municipal council to send protests to President Leguía and to call for the suspension of the *Conscripción Vial*.[153] In effect, this acknowledged the de facto situation in Arequipa. In order to end the general strike and protests, the prefect had agreed to suspend the law in Arequipa until July 1926.[154] Leguía's extraordinary decision to dismiss the mayor and city alderman and to maintain the *Conscripción Vial* in Arequipa reignited the anarchist-led opposition movement. In February 1926 the Popular Assembly sent delegates to Lima to organise a nation-wide campaign with the anarcho-syndicalist labour movement to abolish the *Conscripción Vial*. Their subsequent arrest led to protests in Arequipa and Lima.[155]

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[147] Memoria del Ministro de Gobierno y Policía, *Dr. Pedro José Rada y Gama al Congreso Ordinario de 1923*, Lima: Imprenta del Estado, 1923, x.

[148] See, for example, "La Raza Indígena y el Centenario", *La Protesta*, September 1921.

[149] In 1922 Senator Miguel González reported to the Senate that abuses of the Conscripcion Vial were directly responsible for riots and revolts. See, Thomas M. Davies Jr., *Indian Integration in Peru: A Half Century of Experience, 1900–1948*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1974, 84.

[150] Agustín Barcelli S., *Historia del Sindicalismo Peruano*, Tomo I, Lima: Editorial Jatun-Runa, 1971, 172–179.

[151] José Luis Rénique, *Los sueños de la sierra: cuzco en el siglo xx*, Lima: CEPES, 1991, 95–96.

[152] FIORP also insisted on the need to establishment autonomous Indian schools to overcome ignorance and submissiveness. See, ADA/PFT, Teofilo S. de la Cruz, secretario geneal de turno, Federación Indígena Obrera Regional Peruana a secretaria general de provincial de Espenar (sic), Cuzco, 26 de enero de 1925.

[153] Miles Poindexter to Secretary of State, December 15, 1925, D.S., 823.0/508.

[154] Miles Poindexter to Secretary of State, December 29, 1925, D.S., 823.00/509.

[155] *Humanidad*, 21 February 1926.

Despite increasing state repression in the late 1920s, anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists continued to make resistance to the *Conscripción Vial* a top priority. Both in Arequipa and Lima this took the form of coordinated propaganda campaigns and protests. Among the anarchosyndicalist unions that spearheaded this campaign were the Print Workers' Federation-Lima (*Federación Gráfica*), the Union of Various Trades of Lima (*Sindicato de Oficios Varios de Lima*), and the Construction Workers' Federation-Arequipa (*Federación de Constructores*).[156] In Arequipa the campaign took propaganda by the word to new level by issuing direct threats to the parties responsible for the implementation of the *Conscripción Vial*. The Popular Worker Assembly and the Assembly of Workers' Neighbourhoods informed local authorities that "it had taken note of the home addresses of the *conscripción vial* council ... and had made them known to the people ... the assembly is not responsible for the consequences that may result if it [the council] insists on implementing the law".[157]

The *Conscripción Vial* was a burning issue for the Peru's workingclasses and indigenous peasantry in the 1920s. Anarchists and anarchosyndicalists in the southern highlands and in Lima were responsive to this popular concern. The valour they displayed combating this state imposition earned them the gratitude and support of significant sectors of urban and rural labour force.

Conclusion

The spread of anarcho-syndicalism in Peru during the first three decades of the 20th century was the result of a confluence of factors: The wide circulation of anarchist and syndicalist publications, the influence of a small group of radical immigrants and Peruvian intellectuals, and contacts between Peruvian workers and anarcho-syndicalist organisations in Argentina and Chile.

However, the most important factor was influence of self-constructed worker-intellectuals in Lima-Callao. Home-grown anarcho-syndicalists like Manuel Lévano, Delfín Lévano, Nicolás Gutarra, Adalberto Fonkén, Arturo Sabroso, José Sandoval, and Samuel Rios adapted anarchosyndicalist doctrine and praxis to fit Peruvian realities. The pervasive reality they confronted was a system of domination that politically excluded and socially and culturally marginalized Peru's working classes.

Power over the state and civil society was decidedly under the control of Peru's agro-export *creole* elite. In contrast to the power and relative cohesion of Peru's ruling elite, workers in the modern sectors lacked independent bases of power, were divided by ethnicity, race, sex, and skill, and were widely dispersed among the coastal cities and rural estates, and provincial towns and mining centres in the sierra. Cognizant of this imbalance of power, Peru's anarcho-syndicalists adopted a gradualist approach to social revolution. Indeed, they articulated a revolutionary project predicated on the incremental accumulation of power in workers' union organisations and class struggle. They also emphasized the inseparability of workers' cultural emancipation from social revolution. As a result, they developed an integrated network of union structures and cultural associations that inculcated workers in counter-hegemonic beliefs and values.

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[156] Craig W. Wadsworth *charge d' affaires, ad interim* to Secretary of State, March 8, 1926, D.S., 823.00/514; ADA/PFT, Antonio Neuman, Capitan Comisario a ContraAlmirante Prefecto de Departmento, 13 de enero de 1927; AGN/MI, Pablo Palmo a Prefectura de Departmento, 4 de mayo de 1928.

[157] ADA/PFT Tatto Cano B. secretaria general de Asamblea Popular a Federico G.L. Emmel, 13 de enero de 1927.

Although Peru's anarcho-syndicalist labour movement began to rapidly decline by 1929, it laid the groundwork for subsequent labour politics and working-class struggles in the 1930s and 1940s. Many former anarcho-syndicalist workers would join the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP, f.1930) and the social democratic Peruvian Aprista Party (PAP, f.1930).

In so doing, they transferred to these pro-labour parties elements of their discourse and notions of social justice, cultural emancipation, working-class solidarity, practical syndicalism, and union autonomy. Not infrequently this produced tensions and conflicts between the parties and their supporters within the union movement. For example, workers often resisted subordinating their union organisations and interests to these rival, highly dogmatic, and hierarchical Left parties. Aprista and communist workers in defiance of their respective parties would eschew partisanship and prioritize class solidarity and union autonomy. Old anarchist slogans would also be revived and invoked as when PAP espoused "Neither Liberty Without Bread, Nor Bread Without Liberty" in 1946. Anarcho-syndicalist ideas related to cooperativism and worker control over centres of production continued to influence workers struggles under the PCP and PAP into the 1940s.

Finally, it should be noted that while anarcho-syndicalism went into a steep decline by 1929, it did not disappear completely. As late as the 1940s anarcho-syndicalist workers maintained a presence within the union movement and the anarcho-syndicalist paper, *La Protesta*, reappeared.[158]

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[158] Steven Hirsch, "Ideological Transfers and Traces of Anarchist Praxis: Rethinking the Influence of Anarchism on Peru's APRA Party, 1920–1948", paper presented at the 53rd International Congress of Americanists, Mexico City, Mexico, 22 July 2009.

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Tropical Libertarians:
Anarchist movements and networks in the Caribbean, Southern United States, and Mexico, 1890s–1920s

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Beginning in the late 1800s and continuing—often sporadically— for three decades, anarchist movements operated in Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico and Spanish-speaking migrant zones in the southern United States. Because anarchists always saw themselves as part of a larger working-class internationalist movement fighting against the forces of bourgeois internationalism, these men and women developed linkages throughout the Caribbean, Mexico and southern US. In so doing, they created two, often overlapping, transnational networks in 'tropical' North America.

Three particular historical developments linked the emergence and development of the Caribbean network. First, in Latin America Spanish immigration into Cuba was surpassed only by Spanish immigration to Argentina in the early 20th century. Many of these working-class migrants were either committed anarchists or had been exposed to a long tradition of anarchist activity in Spain. Spanish anarchists sometimes dominated the embryonic anarchist movements (as in Panama) and sometimes supplemented Caribbean-born anarchists as in Cuba, Florida and Puerto Rico.

Second, this network spread at the same time as US military and economic influence stretched throughout the Caribbean Basin beginning in the 1890s. In this context, anarchists represented a transnational movement shaped by and in response to the growing interconnectedness of transnational capital flows and expanding US foreign policy. In fact, one should note that the anarchist network linking Cuba, Puerto Rico and Panama developed in countries whose recent 'independence' was linked to US foreign policy: Cuban independence came as a result of US intervention (1898) and then military occupation (1898–1902 and 1906–09) as US-based industrial concerns poured onto the island; Puerto Rican independence from Spain resulted in the island becoming increasingly linked to the US, which would grant US citizenship to Puerto Ricans in 1917; and, Panama's independence in late 1903 was directly linked to US designs to build a canal across the isthmus.

Third, development of a strong anarchist presence in Cuba facilitated the network's emergence. Havana was not just a stopping off point for Spanish anarchists but more importantly a hub that linked the spokes of the network. Key to Havana's central role as the network hub was the anarchist weekly newspaper *¡Tierra!* ("Land!"), the longest-running (1903–1914) and most widely circulated organ for communication and fundraising. Other anarchist papers in Havana played

brief roles coordinating the network, and small newspapers in Florida, Puerto Rico and Panama helped organise the movements in those locales. In addition, anarchists sometimes utilized American Federation of Labour (AFL)-linked papers in Florida and Puerto Rico. Yet, ¡Tierra! was the most vital newspaper to link these geographically dispersed movements that stretched from the southern US to the northern edge of South America.

The other important Latin American anarchist network in the northern half of the Western Hemisphere existed in Mexico and the US Southwest. Anarchist traditions could be found in parts of Mexico from the mid-1800s, but the first sustained transnational anarchist movement originated with Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magón and the Mexican Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Mexicano*, or PLM). After being forced into exile to Texas in 1904, the Magonistas eventually migrated to Los Angeles, California where they published the longrunning newspaper *Regeneración* ("Regeneration"), a paper that continued to function with the aid of their comrades even when the PLM's main leadership faced mounting legal problems and jail time in the US. The PLM maintained links to anarchists in Mexico and around the United States. In particular, *Regeneración* facilitated communication between the California anarchists, the US-based Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or Wobblies) who developed Spanish-speaking unions on both sides of the border, and Spanish-speaking anarchists in Florida and Cuba where anarchists celebrated the PLM and both closely followed and funded the Mexican Revolution.[1]

Geography, work opportunities, and language bound together both networks. First, the Caribbean network extended from the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico to Caribbean Basin mainland in Panama, stretching across the isthmus to the Pacific Ocean and back north to Florida cities along the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida. The Mexican network was bound by the natural land bridge dissected by the US-Mexico border, reaching north into the central plains of the United States (Missouri), west to Los Angeles, and south to the urban landscape of Mexico City.

Second, these geographical boundaries were themselves intimately linked to labour opportunities as the networks tended to establish nodes along the network routes in places where large numbers of workers and activists could find work. For the Caribbean, that meant the tobacco centres of Florida, Cuba and Puerto Rico, the sugar zones of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the artisan shops of a large city like Havana, and the construction sites of the Panama Canal Zone. Similar nodes developed along the Mexican network, especially in communities along both sides of the Texas-Arizona-Mexico border, the oil fields of the Mexican Gulf Coast and the urban hubs of Los Angeles and Mexico City.

Third, within the labour nodes of these geographically bound networks, language facilitated network connections. These were, first and foremost, Spanish-speaking anarchists, many of whom—though by no means most—were recent immigrants from Spain. While some nonSpanish speaking anarchists moved within these networks, they were few but sometimes played important cross-lingual and thus crosscultural roles in the development of anarchist internationalism

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[1] This chapter explores two occasionally interlocking networks: one radiated out of Havana, Cuba and connected the broader Caribbean Basin. The other created a circuit stretching from Los Angeles, California in the United States to Mexico City and the borderlands between the United States and Mexico. Not explored is a third network that linked Spanish-speaking anarchists throughout the United States with important nodes in Los Angeles, San Francisco, southern Florida and the metropolitan New York City region. At times, New York City became an important destination for migrating anarchists, especially out of Cuba and Florida, while anarchist newspapers in New York City became important communication linkages for the other two networks. All translations in the text are by the author.

along these networks. For instance, Italian anarchists played roles in Florida; English-speaking members of the IWW ran with their Mexican anarchist counterparts on both sides of the US-Mexico border; and, the English anarchist W.C. Owen worked intimately with the PLM in southern California. Despite the presence of this non-Spanish speaking element, these were mainly Spanish-speaking networks with close ties to Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Spain.[2]

This chapter examines how anarchists of different nationalities but linked by language, geography and politics developed movements in these specific locales and then functioned as part of regional networks that sometimes overlapped. The Caribbean and Mexican networks allowed anarchists throughout this vast area the ability to communicate, fund and understand their pursuits for anarchist-defined freedom in a comparative context. By exploring these linkages, we can better see how international anarchism was localized from place-to-place, how the social compositions of different locales impacted the international messages transmitted along these networks, and compare how anarchists in each site carved out spaces to reflect important issues within the global anarchist struggle, against their own locale's elite, and within the context of an economically and militarily expanding United States.

Cuba: the hub of the Caribbean anarchist network

Cuba's anarchist movement arose in the 1870s when cigar makers Enrique Roig de San Martín and Enrique Messonier established a worker's school and newspaper on the outskirts of Havana. By the 1880s, anarchists centred in Cuba's tobacco industry dominated leadership positions in the incipient labour movement. They launched *El Productor* ("The Producer"), a weekly newspaper that ran from 1887– 90. By the 1890s, Cubans of all classes and ideologies began organising and campaigning for independence from Spain.

Anarchists did not uniformly support the independence struggle, though. Some Spanish-speaking anarchists in Cuba, New York City and Spain urged anarchists to avoid becoming involved in what they saw as largely a bourgeois war for independence that would substitute one repressive government for another. For these reasons, the predominantly Spanish anarchists in New York who published *El Despertar* ("The Awakening") openly rejected the independence movement, as did a few Havana-based anarchists like Cristóbal Fuente. Beyond the fear of replacing one government for another, these anti-independence anarchists suspected that any overt anarchist support for the Cuban cause could result in a new wave of repression against anarchists in Cuba and Spain since they were already targets of such state-sanctioned violence. In addition, some anarchists in Cuba especially feared that rejecting neutrality in the conflict could open individual anarchists to counter-measures from Cuban and Spanish workers. In other words, if they openly aided the cause for independence, then Spanish workers seeking to remain loyal to the homeland could attack them; likewise, if anarchists in Cuba opposed independence, then they faced potential retribution from pro-independence Cuban workers.[3]

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[2] While this chapter brackets these two networks to be examined individually and in relation to each other, it is important to remember that they were also linked to other overlapping networks that spanned the United States and that linked the Caribbean Basin with the Iberian Peninsula—broader linkages that cannot be explored here due to space limitations.

[3] Joan Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets! Urban Labour and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850–1898*, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998, 223–226; Kirwin Shaffer, *Anarchism and Countercultural Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005, 43.

Despite these concerns, the majority of anarchists in Cuba, along with anarchists in Spain and Florida, worked to support the island's independence. The outbreak of war in 1895 found most anarchists in Cuba supporting the liberation struggle, seeing the conflict beyond 'nationalist' terms and instead viewing the conflict as an anti-colonial struggle for freedom against Spanish imperialism. They hoped to push the independence movement away from its bourgeois leadership based in New York City and, upon freeing the island from colonial rule, initiate a revolutionary transformation of the island along anarchist principles.

In Spain, anarchists urged workers to resist their own government's calls for war and not go to Cuba to fight. Others asked why only the children of workers were sent to Cuba when the elite—who were the ones truly wanting war to suppress the rebels—did not send their own children to die on Cuban soil. Ultimately, Spanish anarchists largely viewed the war as did their pro-independence comrades in Cuba and Florida: a fight to liberate a people from tyranny. As such no selfrespecting anarchist could oppose a people's desire to be free despite the potential dangers of a post-independence government arising to thwart independence goals of freedom and equality.[4]

On the island and in Florida, Cuban anarchists joined José Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Cubano*, or PRC). They agitated among workers and even Spanish troops. One such agitator was José García, who years after the war recalled how he and a colleague had travelled throughout eastern Cuba during the war, seeking to convert Spanish soldiers to the independence cause.[5] Beyond propaganda, anarchists across Cuba provided supplies and soldiers to the rebels, as well as coordinated activities among migrant workers in the Florida cigar factories who themselves would send men and supplies to the island.[6]

Following Spain's defeat in 1898, the United States briefly controlled the island through a military occupation, eventually giving Cubans significant control of the country in 1902 but retaining important political, military and economic influence. Anarchists emerged during this post-independence era to offer their own agenda for what an independent and internationalist Cuba should look like. This movement—made of men and women, old and young, black and white, Cuban- and foreign-born, skilled and unskilled workers, poets, shopkeepers, playwrights and librarians—dealt with more than bread and butter concerns. They attacked the government for ignoring deteriorating labour conditions, encouraging immigration when unemployment existed, organising schools that did not teach freedom, and being subservient to US political and economic agendas for the island. Through their initiatives, they condemned the political system, party politics, and governmental reforms, and debated the meaning of independence. They also critiqued social issues like health, education, gender, and living and working conditions.

Anarchists like José García, Rafael Serra, Alfredo López, Antonio Penichet, and Adrián del Valle were among the most visible proponents of anarchist internationalism in Cuba. But anarchist internationalism did not mean an abandonment of Cuban reality for the implementation of some foreign-defined concept. Rather, to many anarchists, especially those following the reasoning of Russian revolutionary Mikhail Bakunin, one should support all local struggles trying to break free from outside domination. The local customs, language and history were important features of local and regional autonomy that needed to be respected. This "nationality", as Bakunin referred

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[4] Casanovas, 227; Shaffer, 44.
[5] Casanovas, 226; Shaffer, 44.
[6] Shaffer, 55.

to it, had to be preserved.[7] To destroy it in the name of an outside notion of "internationalism" would be to impose another outer system of control and deny local autonomy. The key was to "Cubanize" international anarchism, i.e., to blend internationalism and nationality.

This interplay between internationalism and nationality took many forms within the island's anarchist movement. First, following independence, anarchists challenged both nationalists and those allied with US neo-colonial agents on the island. To the anarchists Cuba's political and economic elite had abandoned the social goals of jobs and land redistribution promised the fighting masses during the war. Anarchist challenges went to the heart of what they saw as the meaning of independence and thus the meaning of a new Cuban nation. When Cuban leaders arrested or deported anarchists as "pernicious foreigners" in the three decades following the war, anarchists charged that they were the true representatives of the ideals of independence, having fought and died during the war while continuing to struggle to implement those ideals in the midst of practices that sold off Cuba to international capitalism. This unchecked sell-off ran throughout Cuba's economy so that by the 1920s anarchists referred to Cuba as a feudal outpost of the US that undermined Cubans' original goals for autonomy and reform.[8]

Second, anarchist internationalism and Cuban nationality revolved around the image of independence leader José Martí. Within a decade of his 1895 death, Martí had become a national symbol in Cuba. Anarchists early had a love-hate relationship with Martí. His work in the Florida cigar factories in the early 1890s helped to bring the anarchistinfluenced working class into the PRC, thus solidifying working-class support for the struggle versus Spain. His stated goals of social revolution were goals that anarchists saw as their own. In the early 1900s Cuba's elite moved away from fulfilling any social revolutionary goals, yet the elite-controlled Cuban government began celebrating Martí as a 'national' hero. Over time, anarchists also latched on to Martían symbolism, concluding that rather than allow the elite to adopt the war's symbolism for the purpose of the state, that anarchists would "liberate" these symbols from state exploitation. After all, anarchists argued, Martí's liberation goals were more in accord with anarchist goals than with the policies of hierarchy, use of spies, and government attacks on workers that the government was waging in Martí's name.[9]

Third, anarchist internationalism in Cuba had to confront the intertwined issues of labour and immigration. In the first three decades of the 20th century, over 780,000 Spaniards legally migrated to the island.[10] While many Cuban-born workers resented employers' preferences to import and hire foreign (especially Spanish) workers, anarchists urged caution. They noted that Spanish workers were like workers in most countries: generally powerless and doing what they could to put bread on the table.

Anarchists urged Cuban workers to refrain from attacking Spanish migrant workers for taking "Cuban" jobs. Instead, Cuban workers needed to focus their anger first on the Cuban government, which encouraged labour immigration and second on businessmen, who hired desperate foreign workers. Ultimately, anarchists charged the real threat to workers came from the elite in Cuba

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[7] Mikhail Bakunin, "On Nationality, the State, and Federalism" in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchism* ed., Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1990, 401–2.

[8] Shaffer, 39–61.

[9] Shaffer, 62–71.

[10] Shaffer, 73; Fe Iglesias García, "Características de la inmigración española en Cuba (1904–1930)" *Economía y Desarrollo*, March-April 1988, 87; Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, "Trabajo libre e inmigración española en Cuba, 1880–1930", *Revista de Indias*, 52: 195/196, 1992, 770.

who fostered intraworking class conflict around false notions of "nationalism" (i.e., Cuban vs. foreign workers) and thus undermined the social goals of better working conditions and equality. Nevertheless, anarchists understood that immigration was a key stumbling block in forging any working-class unity on the island, and to that end actually wrote columns to the anarchist press in Spain. These columns encouraged Spanish workers not to be misled by labour recruiters who promised easy work and high wages on the island. Rather, Spanish workers could do more for the cause of anarchism and the social revolution by agitating in Spain.[11]

Still, Cuba's anarchists found themselves caught in a dilemma. On one hand, many of them were Spanish immigrants. On the other hand, their anti-statist positions discouraged them from supporting any legal restrictions on the free movement of workers, thus, by default, tacitly supporting unrestricted immigration. Yet, such unrestricted immigration was also what most employers sought because it continually increased labour pools and kept wages low, while helping to undermine working-class unity. Consequently, anarchists found themselves supporting unrestricted immigration (especially from Spain) because it reflected an individual's desires for freedom and free movement, while introducing fresh members to the cause from anarchist zones in Spain. Yet, this free movement also threatened to undermine anarchist organisation efforts in the newly freed Cuba, hampering implementation of anarchist internationalism there.

Fourth, just as anarchists on the island faced dilemmas concerning labour and immigration, so too did they encounter sometimes volatile racial issues. In 1886, chattel slavery ended in Cuba—a very late date by world standards. In fact, only Brazil abolished slavery later than Cuba. Thus, just as the anarchist movement emerged on the island, hundreds of thousands of new wage labourers entered the labour pool. Anarchist leaders like Enrique Roig de San Martín, via his newspaper *El Productor*, urged anarchists to condemn racism and unite workers of all colours against Spanish capital and the Spanish state. The 1892 anarchist-led Workers Conference declared its opposition to "every act or decision that results in the detriment of blacks because of their colour".[12]

After independence, Afro-Cubans found success within the island's labour movement, but success often was matched by political and cultural persecution. Black activists were involved in post-independence labour strikes beginning with the 1899 Masons Strike and continuing into the 1920s when Afro-Cubans and black sugar workers from the Caribbean played key roles in organised labour. By 1933, eight blacks had even served as president of the Stevedores Union in Santiago de Cuba.13 Yet, Afro-Cubans faced political and cultural discrimination, including higher illiteracy than whites, discrimination in employment, and an inability to vote due to illiteracy and lack of property qualifications. When Afro-Cubans mobilized to form their own political party in 1907 (the Independent Party of Colour, *Partido Independiente de Color* or PIC), the Cuban government passed a law prohibiting 'racebased' political parties. When in May 1912 this now-outlawed party held meetings around the island on Cuban Independence Day, the government attacked them, then encouraged white militias and vigilantes to attack party supporters—and even unaffiliated blacks. This "race war" of 1912 killed as many as 6000 Afro-Cubans, and resulted in another 900 thrown in jail and charged with rebellion.[13]

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[11] Shaffer, 72–89.

[12] Shaffer, 91; Casanovas, 193–95; *El movimiento obrero cubano: documentos y artículos*, vol. 1 (1865–1925). Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975, 69 and 82. 13 Shaffer, 91.

[13] Shaffer, 92–93; Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886–1912*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995, 117–16.

The anarchist record on racial animosity in Cuba is anything but stellar here, as anarchists responded weakly to the events of 1912. In their newspapers, they attacked the PIC for forming a political party and engaging in bourgeois elections. They suggested that black politicians were no better than any other politician and that Afro-Cubans would be better served uniting against both capital and the state within the anarchist movement. Yet anarchists accompanied this non-racial political critique with praises for Afro-Cuban culture and the contributions of Afro-Cubans in the liberation struggles of the 1890s.[14]

In response to the race war, anarchists generally felt impotent. As targets of state repression themselves, they recognized they could do little to stop this most egregious attack of racism. Writers like Adrián del Valle and Eugenio Leante urged readers to consider the importance of education and the good upbringing of children to root out racist attitudes that led to the massacre. For example, in the first issue of his new free-thinking journal *El Audaz*, Del Valle addressed the massacre and racism, arguing that the massacre resulted from the legacy of slavery—by that time only having been abolished for one generation—and that continued racism that fed into the massacre rested squarely on whites' shoulders.[15] This weak response reflected the anarchist inability to gain much support from Afro-Cubans, who sometimes saw anarchists as "whites" or as "foreigners" or as both— white foreigners who took their jobs. Still, several Afro-Cubans did rise to important leadership positions in the movement from the 1910s to 1920s, including Rafael Serra (who remained active into the 1940s), the printer Pablo Guerra, and Margarito Iglesias (the black anarchist leader of the Manufacturers Union in the 1920s).[16]

Ultimately, anarchist agitators, writers and union leaders had to confront concerns of how to interpret the war, the role of anarchists in the liberation struggles, and the anarchist positions on immigration and race within a Cuban context. By focusing on Cuban "nationality", they framed anarchist internationalism to fit specific Cuban contexts in efforts to attract more followers by creating an anarchist-defined sense of Cubanness. To them, Cuba was a new site for revolutionary conflict—a site that had to be respected for its own ways and culture (its nationality) but which could also be a place for the international working class to come, if necessary, to continue the fight for a social revolution against bourgeois internationalists and their Cuban allies in the new government.

Besides these internationalist-nationality concerns, anarchist idealism was always tempered by an understanding of current social issues that impacted workers on a daily basis. For that reason, social concerns surrounding health, education and gender also went to the core of anarchist pursuits in Cuba. The first US occupation of the island witnessed remarkable improvements in health and sanitation. Yet anarchists believed that "real" health reforms had to focus on eliminating poor working conditions and destitute living environments. Consequently, health was a prominent issue in framing the struggles that anarchists waged against Cuba's leaders. Anarchists condemned what they saw as negligence in fixing the unhealthy working conditions in the factories, cafés, restaurants, and the expanding sugar complexes because owners refused to spend the money necessary to improve lighting, airflow, and sanitation. In the same vein, they argued that politicians and state agency functionaries were either powerless or unwilling to force

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[14] *¡Tierra!*, June 4, 1910, 3; *Rebelión*, April 10, 1910, 3.

[15] Shaffer, 96–97; *El Audaz*, July 5, 1912, 2.

[16] Shaffer, 100.

owners to make such improvements, implying that the social revolution promised by the war had been hijacked by native and foreign capitalists.

Anarchists often critiqued Cuba's health situation by describing the suffering of women and children. For instance, they lamented how Spanish owners of restaurants and cafés often hired children to work long hours in smoky, unclean conditions with little fresh air or sunlight. The blatant link to Spanish owners was designed to illustrate a recurring anarchist argument: little had changed since the era of Spanish rule. When they also charged that state health departments refused to play a more active role in regulating the health and sanitary standards of these establishments, they sought to show how the current Cuban government was little better than the previous colonial regime.

Finally, women played important roles in the island's tobacco industry where they dominated the position of *despalilladora* (tobacco leaf strippers). Anarchists used health critiques here as well, claiming that conditions forced young women to bend over barrels of leaf all day, 'knotting up' their insides, and leading to later problems bringing pregnancies to term. Because anarchists stressed the importance of family, they portrayed owner and state negligence as harmful not only to male workers, but also female and child labourers who would give rise to new generations of unhealthy Cubans.[17]

While anarchists linked child victimization to health concerns, they also portrayed it within the evolving Cuban educational system. After independence, US military occupations stimulated public school reforms, religious schools expanded, and the Cuban state took an active role in public education. Yet, anarchists rejected these systems on a number of fronts. They attacked religious schools, portraying Catholic schools as embodying mysticism and as the institution that most frequently attacked rational, scientific-based education. As a result, they saw such schools as holdovers from the pre-independence era that would reinforce an earlier form of educational tyranny. Anarchists likewise despised public schools. They portrayed the Cuban state as using public education to indoctrinate students in a form of patriotic nationalism that reinforced the rule of capitalist elites, preserved social hierarchies inherited from Spanish colonialism, and fashioned in students an elite-defined sense of Cubanness symbolically reinforced by saying a pledge of allegiance and singing the national anthem.

Anarchists went beyond these critiques to create their own schools. Building on the worker-initiated schools from before independence and the educational experiments of Francesco Ferrer i Guàrdia in Spain, rationalist schools went through two phases—the first a haphazard affair loosely organised by anarcho-communist groups from 1905–1912. The second was more coordinated and better financed by the anarcho-syndicalist influenced labour unions of the 1920s. However, the schools always struggled due to a lack of funding and difficulties finding trained teachers. Ultimately, while schools arose for short periods around the island, they did not attract large numbers of children.[18]

Consequently, anarchists staged (literally) alternative educational mediums to reach larger audiences. This revolutionary culture of novels, plays, poetry recitals, short stories, and songs put forth the movement's ideals, critiqued larger social forces that impacted people's daily lives, and offered people the opportunity to perform. In a sense, the actual stage became a means for people to "perform" as rebels while simultaneously "teaching" their audiences.

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[17] Shaffer, 107–25.
[18] Shaffer, 165–94.

Because women played a key role in the anarchist imagination, authors explicitly targeted them with their literary and performance culture. Authors portrayed women as victims and victimizers, depending on the particular message of a piece. Most importantly, authors held up women as "revolutionary mothers" who protected and guided the family toward freedom. Though their portrayals of women reflected a patriarchal bias of women primarily as care-givers, they sought to portray working mothers who could function equally with men both inside and outside the home where they served as symbols of an emancipated humanity.[19]

While the anarchist movement in Cuba, born in the mid-19th century, spread throughout Havana and parts of western Cuba by the 1910s, it always struggled to maintain financial solvency and relevance within the working class. However, with the beginning of World War I and the US desire to secure Cuban exports, a wave of repression that included closings of newspapers and deportations undermined the anarchist movement. By the late 1910s, though, a new, mostly anarcho-syndicalist movement emerged. Led by printers like Antonio Penichet and Alfredo López, syndicalists proved instrumental in creating the Havana Federation of Labour (*Federación Obrera de La Habana*, or FOH) and the National Confederation of Cuban Workers (*Confederación Nacional de Obreros Cubanos*, CNOC) in the early 1920s.

The CNOC became the first island-wide labour organisation in Cuba and anarchists held leadership roles, along with Marxists like Carlos Baliño (a former anarchist) and Julio Antonio Mella (soon to be a founder of the Cuban Communist Party). Beyond organising labour actions like boycotts and strikes, the anarchist-led CNOC and FOH organised a new wave of rationalist schools that spread across the island. Unlike the first wave of schools that relied on the unreliable donations from individual workers, this wave of schools counted on the more regular contributions from labour organisations.

However, the emerging anarcho-syndicalist successes in cross-sectarian alliance building, labour mobilization and educational development faced internal and external challenges. Some anarcho-communist groups opposed working with Marxists, and rejected the syndicalists' frequent praise for the Bolshevik revolution. More threatening, though, was the election in 1925 of President Gerardo Machado. By the mid-1920s, the Cuban economy was solidly controlled by US-based companies that dominated the sugar, construction and transportation industries.

The rise of an energized anarchist-inspired labour militancy threatened US economic interests. Because the 1902 Cuban Constitution allowed the United States to militarily intervene in Cuban affairs when the US felt that Cuba was becoming unstable, there were solid fears that in fact US military action was imminent. Presidential candidate Machado—a solid ally of the US and US-based corporations—ran on a 'nationalist' campaign, promising that if he were elected that he would clamp down on labour militancy, thwart a US invasion of the country, and thus preserve Cuban independence. Shortly after his assumption of power, the repression against anarchists and Marxists ensued. The government labelled both as "pernicious foreigners" and jailed, disappeared, assassinated, deported, or forced dozens of anarchists and other radicals into exile. The '*machadato*,' as the era of Machado's rule is remembered, marked the end of the anarchist movement as an effective element for radical social change in Cuba. However, like Mexico (as discussed below), elements of anarchist organising would remain alive into the 1930s and beyond, with workers utilizing anarcho-syndicalist direct action and sugar mill occupations in the 1933 Revolution, organising against fascism and for the Spanish Republican cause in the 1930s and

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[19] Shaffer, 195–207.

40s, and supporting anti-government efforts via propaganda, sabotage and rebel support during the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s.[20]

South Florida: the northern link in the Caribbean network

The first anarchists arrived in Florida from Cuba during Cuba's first war for independence from 1868–1878 when political exiles fled to Key West. By 1873 Key West was "the leading manufacturing city of Florida", producing 25 million cigars per year with largely Cuban migrant labour.[21] The real growth of industrial Florida, though, began in 1886 when cigar factory owner Vicente Martínez Ybor relocated his factories from Havana and Key West to the outskirts of Tampa, hoping to escape the labour movement that was increasingly influenced by Havana-based anarchists like Enrique Roig de San Martín. He soon negotiated a land deal with the Tampa Board of Trade, creating the company town of Ybor City.

Anarchists from Spain and Cuba immediately organised activities and institutions in Tampa so that the movement's rise mirrored its rise in Havana. Circular migration developed between the two cities— migration of not only workers but also anarchists and anarchist publications. The Havana-based *El Productor, El Obrero* ("The Worker"), and *Archivo Social* ("Social Archive") commented on issues central to these workers, and *El Productor* relied on correspondents in Florida.[22] For those who could not read or purchase the papers, they could hear the *lector* (reader) in the cigar factory read aloud articles while stripping, sorting or rolling leaf into cigars. An anarchist press emerged in Tampa when *El Esclavo* ("The Slave") began an almost weekly run from June 1894 to March 1898. The paper proved important to the anarchist network between Havana and Florida. Besides covering Florida and Cuba issues, it also offered early and continuous anarchist support for Cuba's independence struggle.

While some Tampa anarchists were reluctant to wage war, J. Raices offered his unqualified support. In his four-part article "La revolución social avanza" ("The Social Revolution Advances") that concluded on February 6, 1895, just weeks before war began, Raices argued that Cuban workers had to fight for the revolution against Spain. By doing so, workers "can win from this a powerful moral influence that will give us at the same time all of the material force that we need in order to establish there [in Cuba] the true revolutionary socialism".[23]

As Florida anarchists joined Martí's PRC, *El Esclavo* provided unwavering support for independence. Secundino Delgado, one of the paper's editors, illustrates how anarchist internationalism in support of the war worked on the ground. Born in 1871, Delgado grew up on the Spanish island of Tenerife. In 1885 the 14-year-old crossed the Atlantic to find work in Cuba. Later that year, after becoming exposed to anarchist influences in Havana's tobacco trades, Delgado migrated

[20] Shaffer, 230–32; Barry Carr, "Mill Occupations and Soviets: The Mobilisation of Sugar Workers in Cuba 1917–1933", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28, 1996, 156–57; Sam Dolgoff, *The Cuban Revolution: A Critical Perspective*, Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1977, 55–117; Frank Fernández, *El anarquismo en Cuba*, Madrid: Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo, 2000, 82–122.

[21] Gary R. Mormino and George E. Pozzetta, "Spanish Anarchism in Tampa, Florida, 1886–1931" in Dirk Hoerder (ed.), *"Struggle a Hard Battle": Essays on Working-Class Immigrants*, Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986, 175.

[22] Gerald Poyo, "The Anarchist Challenge to the Cuban Independence Movement, 1885–1890" *Cuban Studies*, 15: 1, 1985, 35.

[23] *El Esclavo*, February 6, 1895, 1–2.

to Tampa and began a ten-year stint in the city advocating anarchism and Cuban independence. With the outbreak of war, Delgado went to Havana but soon fled, returning to the Canary Islands. He travelled to Venezuela when Spanish General Valeriano Weyler accused him of being a Florida-based radical who orchestrated an assassination attempt in Havana. Eventually, this Canary Islands native returned to Spain where he became an outspoken proponent of Canary nationalism and independence.[24]

In December 1894, *El Esclavo* published two columns linking anarchist support for violent struggle with the creation of a socialistic Cuba. The lead column welcomed war because "Cuban workers, we are going to be the first to raise the red flag and show the entire world by example and soon it will be inclined to follow our lead". This celebratory call for Cuba to be a beacon for global revolution echoed through the adjoining column—Bakunin's "Civil War". Bakunin championed the benefits of civil war, which is what events in Cuba reflected, i.e., Spanish citizens fighting each other. To Bakunin, civil war could be beneficial because conflict brought forth popular initiatives and awoke bored, passive peoples to feelings of rebellion in order to acquire true freedom from the state.[25]

In August 1895 *El Esclavo* continued to praise the level of rebel violence unleashed throughout Cuba. "Hurray for dynamite! Let the spirit of destruction guide the revolutionaries' paths", proclaimed one front page.[26] To this end, anarchists blew up bridges and gas lines throughout Havana. The most celebrated bombing occurred in 1896 against the quintessential symbol of Spanish rule: the Palace of the CaptainsGeneral near Havana harbour. Planned in Florida with poor-quality dynamite, the explosion succeeded merely in destroying the latrines.[27] Yet, Tampa celebrated the bombing for its symbolism and further encouraged "those producing similar explosions!"[28]

While bombings relied on anarchist networks and cells already existent in Cuba, Florida also served as a staging ground from which to launch armed expeditions to Cuba. Some anarchists joined these expeditions. For instance, Enrique Creci, a Cuban cigar roller and anarchist who had published *Archivo Social*, moved to Tampa in the summer of 1895.[29] He soon became a captain in the rebel forces and led an assault from Key West in 1896. Shortly afterward, though, Spanish forces captured and executed him.[30] Tampa's anarchists honoured his death in May 1897. While Spaniards and Cubans dominated the Florida anarchist ranks, a few Italians could be found in their midst. One of these, Orestes Ferrara, invaded Cuba from Florida, stayed in Cuba after the war, renounced anarchism, and became a prominent politician.[31]

As the war progressed, new anarchist groups emerged in Tampa. By February 1896 at least five separate anarchist groups operated in the city, raising funds to support the fight, launching fundraisers to support deported anarchists' families left behind in Cuba, and organising supplies for rebel forces.[32] Yet, the ability to raise funds for the war effort quickly became a problem when

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[24] Juan José Cruz, "You Can't Go Home, Yankee: Teaching U.S. History to Canary Islands Students", *The History Teacher*, 35: 3, 2002, 362–3; Casanovas, 227.

[25] *El Esclavo*, December 19, 1894, 1.

[26] *El Esclavo*, August 28, 1895, 1–2.

[27] Casanovas, 227.

[28] *El Esclavo*, May 19, 1896, 3.

[29] Olga Cabrera, "Enrique Creci: un patriota obrero", *Santiago*, 36, December 1979, 146.

[30] Shaffer, 43–44; Casanovas, 227.

[31] *El Esclavo*, June 5, 1897, 4.

[32] *El Esclavo*, January 22, 1896, 1 and 4; February 20, 1896, 4; January 13, 1897, 2; February 24, 1897, 4.

the key economic engine of Cuba and Florida—tobacco—was disrupted. Both sides' scorched earth policies destroyed fields, meaning less leaf arrived in Florida and demand for labour slowed. Since anarchists relied on workers to support their activities and the war effort, the intensification of conflict ironically meant less money was available to finance that conflict.

The decade preceding Cuba's independence from Spain witnessed a prominent and influential anarchist movement on both sides of the Florida Straits. The two cities of Tampa and Havana—and their anarchist movements too—were interdependent. Before 1898, both cities had thriving anarchist presses that fed off one another and solidified a key link in the emerging regional anarchist network that would soon expand into new areas as US military and economic interests spread throughout the Caribbean. Yet, the height of anarchism in Tampa was about to end as the new century began. With the US intervention and ultimately Cuba's liberation from Spanish rule in 1898, Tampa's anarchists redirected their energies to labour and political struggles in Florida where most tobacco workers—even in Ybor City—remained unorganised.[33] In August 1899, at the end of a general strike, tobacco workers formed the anarchist-dominated Society of Tampa Cigar Rollers (*La Sociedad de Torcedores de Tampa*, or simply *La Resistencia*, "The Resistance") with its own newspaper *La Federación* ("The Federation").[34] Reflecting the union's by-laws "to resist the exploitation of labour by capital", the union incorporated non-cigar workers, including bakers, restaurant workers, porters, and laundry workers.[35]

A peaceful coexistence between anarchists and the International—a rival union affiliated with the AFL—collapsed in the fall of 1900 as the two unions fought over turf and members. A second anarchist newspaper, *La Voz del Esclavo* ("The Voice of the Slave"), emerged to lend support to *La Resistencia*. But such an open, foreign-dominated anarchist movement (with two newspapers, no less), plus anarchist calls for cross-national and cross-racial unity that made appeals to people of colour, unnerved Tampa's white elite just as efforts to enforce racial segregation gained speed in Tampa in the early 1900s.[36]

Nativist agendas found expression in legal and physical assaults against *La Resistencia*. In August 1901, the all-white Citizens Committee kidnapped thirteen union leaders, including prominent anarchist Luis Barcia, put them aboard a ship at night, and deserted them on the coast of Honduras. This, coupled with sabotaging the anarchist press, closing soup kitchens and attacking strikers undermined anarchist efforts in Tampa. With the assassination of US President William McKinley in September, repression of anarchists across the US ensued and *La Resistencia* died in 1902.[37]

The decimation of *La Resistencia, La Federación* and *La Voz del Esclavo* crippled anarchist agitation and activity in Florida for years. Some anarchists aligned themselves with the International, attempting to operate on the margins of that organisation and publishing in the union's newspaper *El Internacional*. Beginning in 1903, though, Tampa's anarchists found a new, if distant, communication outlet in the surging anarchist movement in Havana. In that year, the Cuban

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[33] Durward Long, " '*La Resistencia*': Tampa's Immigrant Labour Union", *Labor History*, 6, 1965, 195; Mormino and Pozzetta, 188.

[34] Long, 195–96; Mormino and Pozzetta, 189.

[35] Nancy A. Hewitt, *Southern Discomfort: Women's Activism in Tampa, Florida, 1880s–1920s*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001, 115.

[36] For a brilliant and insightful look at conflicting issues of race, class, gender and ethnicity in Tampa, one should consult Hewitt's *Southern Discomfort*.

[37] *La Federación*, "Suplemento a La Federación de Tampa, Fla.", September 10, 1901.

group *¡Tierra!* began publishing a weekly newspaper by the same name. Until it folded in 1914, *¡Tierra!* collected money, published correspondent columns from Florida, and in effect became the voice of Florida's anarchists. The linkage between Florida and the new anarchist newspaper in Havana cannot be overstated. With no organ of their own, anarchists in Tampa, Key West and St. Augustine became major financial backers of the paper. From 1903 to 1906, the majority of the funds came from Tampa, with frequent large contributions from Key West and St. Augustine. The St. Augustine funds were always collected and sent by Luis Barcia, who had relocated there by February 1904. During this three-and-a-half year span, Florida's contributions frequently represented the majority of income received by the paper during any given issue.[38]

In Tampa, though, anarchists continued to confront a passive labour force and a violent political establishment. Citizens groups continued to look at anarchists as representatives of a dangerous, foreign, unAmerican ideology. One anarchist correspondent to *¡Tierra!* in August 1903 listed a series of recent actions perpetrated by the Citizens Committee that included a new wave of deportations, executions, and the grisly castration of two black workers found cavorting with two white women, their testicles hung on display in local taverns.

Yet, apathetic workers did nothing, perplexing anarchists.[39] While a few workers were sympathetic to anarchist ideas, workers proved to be even more interested in a solid wage, which the AFL-linked International—as an 'American' union—could in their eyes best achieve.

Also, one can assume that many workers simply disliked anarchists' puritanical social agendas: no beer or rum, no cards, no pool, no paidfor female companionship. One should also not discount the influence of "nativism" in Tampa as workers often faced a choice of aligning with a "pro-American" union linked to a larger white- and Americanled leadership versus a "foreign" movement increasingly portrayed as dangerous and targeted for repression. In short, the average worker— guided by materialistic interests or fearful of coming into the Citizens Committees' cross hairs—moved away from anarchism by 1905.

While 1906–12 were years of growth and expansion of the movement in Cuba, Florida-based activists struggled to be heard, having lost much of the influence they waged in the labour movement and as a counter-cultural Latin presence during the previous decade. Still, they fought to keep *lectores* reading *¡Tierra!,* laboured to open a rationalist school, continued to agitate in favour of 'true internationalism,' created a small branch of the IWW in 1911, listened to Puerto Rican anarchist and feminist Luisa Capetillo in the city in 1913, and maintained as best they could linkages with the Cuban radicals. However, by World War I, *¡Tierra!* folded and the AFL controlled the labour movement. Anarchists would occasionally make speeches or be arrested in Florida after this point, but their movement effectively ceased to be of consequence.

Puerto Rico: The eastern link in the Caribbean network

Anarchist ideas emerged in Puerto Rico in the late 19th century, flowing from Spain and merging with local realities to take on specific Puerto Rican dimensions. Anarchism combined with a longer tradition of *parejería*, i.e., "disrespect for hierarchy and pride of self," that consumed the is-

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[38] The author conducted this calculation by examining the published contribution lists on page four of *¡Tierra!* from 1903 to 1906.

[39] *¡Tierra!,* August 29, 1903, 3–4.

land's artisans.[40] Like their comrades in Cuba and elsewhere, shapers of Puerto Rican anarchism also understood their island's condition within a global context. By the 1890s, they developed a "strong sense of internationalism, which they incorporated into their struggles and their traditions".[41]

In 1899, men sympathetic to anarchism formed the Free Federation of Workers (*Federación Libre de Trabajadores*, or FLT). One of these men, Santiago Iglesias Pantín, migrated from Spain to Cuba, worked with that island's anarchists in the 1890s, and then migrated to Puerto Rico as an anarchist.

Yet, following US occupation and control of the island, Iglesias soon abandoned anarchism and adopted more parliamentary ways. He became the FLT's main representative to the AFL after leading the FLT away from its early sympathy for anarchism toward a bread-andbutter, pro-Americanization stance that fit the AFL agenda.[42] Former anarchist FLT leaders like Iglesias and Ramón Romero Rosa linked the FLT with the AFL, believing that Puerto Rican workers would materially benefit by associating with an "American" union. Most of the FLT's rank-and-file supported this approach. Yet, many mid-level FLT members continued to push an anarchist agenda.[43]

Because the FLT was the largest labour organisation on the island, anarchists had to be a part of it or risk being marginalized. However, this anarchist presence in the FLT often created internal conflicts. For instance, anarchists distrusted politics but the FLT often cooperated with political parties and even linked itself to the Socialist Party in 1915. Anarchists also questioned the Americanization of the island's workers. With the linkage to the AFL, its flirtation with US socialist parties, and the celebration of the US Labour Day instead of May Day by 1907, anarchists asked if the FLT truly had the island's workers in its best interests.[44]

Puerto Rican anarchists were on shaky ground as the island's larger labour movement became involved in the post-war political situation. In Cuba anarchists had largely supported that island's fight for independence, seeing the conflict as a way for a people to be free from colonial rule. After independence, Cuban anarchists repeatedly challenged political leaders who expropriated the images of the war and 'national' symbols for their own political agendas. Puerto Rican anarchists' dilemma was different. First, there had never been much of an independence movement on Puerto Rico. Then, Puerto Rican anarchists rejected nationalism, but this put them in the same camp as the FLT leaders, who likewise rejected political independence from the US. Yet, unlike the FLT leadership, anarchists rejected Americanization. In essence, anarchists belonged to the Americanist FLT, but were an antinationalist wing that rejected the FLT's pro-American stance.

In 1905 anarchists began to make their presence heard as a distinct voice in the FLT. In the central-eastern town of Caguas, anarchists led by José Ferrer y Ferrer and Pablo Vega Santos dominated the FLT local. Juan Vilar and other Caguas-based tobacco-workers organised *Grupo*

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[40] A.G. Quintero-Rivera, "Socialist and Cigarmaker: Artisans' Proletarianization in the Making of the Puerto Rican Working Class", *Latin American Perspectives*, 10: 2–3, 1983, 21–24.

[41] Quintero-Rivera, 28. See also Norma Valle Ferrer, *Luisa Capetillo: Historia de una mujer proscrita*, San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Cultural, 1990, 34–36.

[42] Miles Gavin, "The Early Development of the Organised Labour Movement in Puerto Rico", *Latin American Perspectives*, 3:3, 1976): 28–30.

[43] Rubén Dávila Santiago, "El pensimiento social obrero a comienzas del siglo XX en Puerto Rico", *Revista Historia*, 1:2, 1985, 164.

[44] Gavin, 27–28.

"Solidaridad" (the Solidarity Group). This organisation held meetings, wrote columns to their comrades in Cuba, founded a Social Studies Centre (*Centro de Estudios Sociales*) for educational work, and began publishing their own newspaper, *Voz Humana* (the "Human Voice").[45]

"Solidaridad" set the stage for future anarchists like Angel M. Dieppa, Luisa Capetillo and others who pushed a pro-labour agenda while challenging the political situation in Puerto Rico. For instance, in the midst of widespread labour unrest in 1905, anarchists used labour disputes to challenge the island's political reality. In a pointed attack against the island's establishment, Vega Santos noted how the elite criticized labour actions by calling strikers uneducated bamboozlers who were led by destructive anarchist doctrines. Such attacks were published in the newspaper *La Democracia* ("Democracy")—a point, according to Vega Santos, that reflected how the press (even with such a word as "democracy" in its title) "had been placed on the side of the capitalists and the government" and away from the island's democratic masses. Vega Santos asked how officials on an island now ruled by the 'democratic' United States could break up peaceful public meetings and ban demonstrations. What did democracy mean in Puerto Rico?[46]

Anarchists repeated this critique of democracy and the United States from 1905 to 1910, challenging the US impact on the island, the role of elections and the threats posed by US-based unions. Puerto Rican anarchists repeatedly expressed anti-American sentiments. For instance, as police abuses mounted against striking workers in 1905, the Caguas anarchists asked how such events could occur in a 'democratic' land. As one anonymous writer put it, the island's police were no better than Russian Cossacks and San Juan was no different than Moscow, Odessa or St. Petersburg where the police and military butchered workers during the 1905 Revolution.[47] Writing from the western city of Mayagüez, the female anarchist Paca Escabí echoed the Cuban anarchists: what had changed since the 1898 US invasion and end of Spanish rule? For Escabí, the only real change was that North Americans, who led people to dream of a better life, had actually crushed peoples' hopes. "The American invasion of Puerto Rico only means division among workers, scandals in the administration, moral disorder, and hunger, exodus and grief for the people".[48]

During election time, the uniqueness of Puerto Rico's larger political status as linked to the United States placed anarchists in the position of attacking both Puerto Rican and US politics. Thus, while anarchists in Cuba may have periodically challenged the military occupation governments and lamented the threat of US intervention, Cuba was, at least technically, an independent country. Puerto Rico's status was clouded by US refusal to incorporate the island as a state or grant Puerto Rican independence. Since the governor was a US presidential appointee, anarchists blurred the line between anti-politics rhetoric and anti-imperialist attacks. Alfonso Torres in San Juan addressed this specifically: "Here in Puerto Rico, where we cannot count on our own government … here where no power exists other than that of the North Americans, here where the governor and the executive council are the same rulers, what they order, oppresses the people, so that the struggles of the [Puerto Rican] political parties are not really about power because power is in foreign hands".[49]

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[45] *¡Tierra!*, June 24, 1905, 3 and *Cultura Obrera* (New York), May 22, 1915. The latter includes an obituary of Juan Vilar, who wrote and organised on the island until he died on May Day 1915.

[46] *¡Tierra!*, May 20, 1905, 2–3.

[47] *¡Tierra!*, September 2, 1905, 2.

[48] *¡Tierra!*, October 7, 1905, 2.

[49] *¡Tierra!*, August 4, 1906, 2.

A central issue surrounding US impact on the island revolved around the influence of the AFL, its leader Samuel Gompers, and Santiago Iglesias (Gompers' key representative in Puerto Rico). Anarchists were alienated by the Iglesias-Gompers connection, Iglesias working for and being paid by the AFL, and both men's support for Americanization. This pro-American stance was coupled, in anarchist views, with an AFL bias in favour of workers on the US mainland over workers on the island. For instance, in 1906 and 1907 anarchists challenged the AFL's International Tobacco Workers Union which sought to organise the industry in Florida and Puerto Rico. The union collected the same dues regardless of location. Thus, worse-paid workers on the island paid the same as better-paid workers in Tampa. One anarchist suggested that the so-called "international" union was more interested in mainland workers and should be known as the "Internal Union", not the International Union.[50] In the northwest community of Arecibo, Venancio Cruz further charged that such practices undermined labour on the island. Were AFL unions "internationalist" or simply manipulating internationalism for their own domestic agendas?[51]

The conflictive nature of this relationship between the AFL/FLT and

Puerto Rican anarchists can be seen in a three-month span in mid1909. In April, Iglesias called anarchists "rogues" for their frequent criticism. In response, an anarchist called Iglesias a sell-out: "you were one of them [an anarchist, which he'd been in the 1890s], with the difference that you lost your old work shoes while we, with dignity, kept ours". The charge of Iglesias having sold out and become part of the labour aristocracy was reinforced in the same column when the writer, noting Iglesias' history of meetings with Washington politicians, accused Iglesias of "aspiring to suck the Washington dairy from [President] Taft's tit".[52]

Yet, while animosity could flourish, anarchists still worked among the FLT rank-and-file. For instance, just months after the charges against Iglesias, anarchists worked intimately with the FLT's *Cruzada del Ideal* ("Crusade for the Ideal"), a propaganda campaign where working-class intellectuals spoke at public demonstrations. In Mayagüez, for instance, the anarchist and feminist Luisa Capetillo ran into Alfonso Torres and other anarchists—suitcases in hand—heading out to mobilize workers in July 1909.[53] In addition, anarchists continued to play key deliberative roles during island-wide meetings, such as the 1910 FLT congress.[54]

The departure of anarchists like Dieppa and Capetillo to the United States in 1911 and 1912 respectively, coupled with the imprisonment of Vilar for a year at the same time for his supposed links to a convicted murderer, contributed to the weakening of the small anarchist movement in Puerto Rico. Gradually, some long-time anarchists accepted reformist positions and leadership roles in the FLT, including Pablo Vega Santos. The movement's small size in the 1910s undermined efforts to create an anarchist periodical that might be used to organise workers. In conjunction with the collapse of *¡Tierra!* in late 1914 and the creation of the Socialist Party in 1915, anarchists found themselves struggling to communicate with both the wider world and potential island followers. By the spring of 1915, anarchists turned to the New York-based *Cultura Obrera* ("Worker's Culture") to communicate with the international movement and the handful of Puerto

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[50] *Voz Humana*, October 22, 1906, 3.

[51] *¡Tierra!*, June 12, 1907, 3.

[52] *¡Tierra!*, April 14, 1909, 2.

[53] Julio Ramos (ed.), *Amor y anarquía: Los escritos de Luisa Capetillo*, San Juan, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, 1992, 34–35, 75–78.

[54] *Procedimientos del sexto congreso obrero de la Federación Libre de los Trabajadores de Puerto Rico. Celebrado del 18 al 24 de marzo de 1910, en la ciudad de Juncos, R.*, San Juan, Puerto Rico: Tipografía de M. Burillo & Co., 1910.

Rican anarchists and other radicals making their way to New York. For example, Basilio Marcial in Bayamón wrote to this IWW organ edited by Spanish anarchist Pedro Esteve. However, by then the quest to create an anarchist-defined Puerto Rico was slipping away.[55]

Nevertheless, die-hard anarchists continued to agitate when and where they could. Anarcho-communists Marcial, Ventura Mijón, Antonio Palau and Emiliano Ramos published the weekly *El Comunista* ("The Communist") from May Day 1920 to February 1921 out of Bayamón and sold it around the island. Two dozen writers from across Puerto Rico sent money and columns attacking the AFL/FLT, working conditions, creation of the Puerto Rican National Guard, former anarchists Vega Santos and Iglesias, and US interventions in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.[56]

In the heady revolutionary years following 1917, some anarchists around the world openly supported the Russian Revolution. In Cuba, anarcho-syndicalists tended to take such a stance, while anarcho-communists were more cautious of or opposed the Bolsehviks. In Puerto Rico, the opposite occurred as the *El Comunista* group supported the Russian Revolution. This support also spelled a new dimension in how some Puerto Rican anarchists spoke of the island's independence. They applauded the Russian Revolution, adding that "All countries have the right to their own destiny, including P.R. [sic]".[57]

While anarchists had long rejected a straight-forward political independence for the island, by 1920, the growing Unionist Party called for that very goal. Anarchists challenged the Unionists, asking what would happen if the US flag were actually lowered and the island became independent. Would exploitation of workers end? Would people have enough to eat instead of food being exported? If the answer was 'no,' then independence alone was just political deception of the people. Rather, real independence had to include a restructuring of society based on the egalitarian principles of anarcho-communism with decentralized decision-making and local autonomy from a centralized state bureaucracy.[58]

In addition, international solidarity remained important to the group, including aligning with Communists and the IWW in the US and anarchist comrades in Cuba like Antonio Penichet and Marcial Salinas—the latter recently arrived in Havana from Tampa.[59] These international linkages found expression financially as well. By the time the anarchist movement collapsed for good and this last Puerto Rican anarchist newspaper shut down in 1921 due to work slowdowns in the tobacco industry, significant amounts of money were arriving from elsewhere in the network, especially Tampa. Contributions from the latter included the old Florida anarchist Luis Barcia.[60]

The Panama Canal Zone: the western link in the Caribbean network

In 1903, the US chose to construct a trans-isthmian canal through Colombia's northern province of Panama. To that end the Roosevelt

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[55] *Cultura Obrera*, February 13, 1915, 2 and March 13, 1915, 4.

[56] *El Comunista*, May 15, 1920, 3; July 10, 1920, 2; July 31, 1920, 2; and, August 14, 1920, 4.

[57] *El Comunista*, June 26, 1920, 6.

[58] *El Comunista*, July 17, 1920, pgs. 2 and 4.

[59] *El Comunista*, May 29, 1920, 3 and September 25, 1920, pgs. 1 and 4.

[60] *El Comunista*, February 19, 1921, 4. "Significant" in terms of importance to *El Comunista* since, as was previously noted, the anarchist movement in Tampa by the 1920s had lost most of its previous influence in that city.

Administration aided the province's liberation from Colombia in November. Panama then ceded to the United States a ten-mile wide stretch of land in the heart of the new country to build the canal. Between 1904 and 1914, tens of thousands of labourers from around the world made their way to this slice of North American territory in the heart of the tropics. From 1906–08, 8,298 contracted workers migrated from Spain and 500 came from Cuba. Besides thousands arriving by contract from the West Indies, unknown thousands of non-contracted workers poured into the zone, driving down wages.[61]

One historian has asserted that it was the thousands of Spanishspeaking workers who brought to Panama "the seed of class consciousness and anarcho-syndicalism".[62] US officials, in fact, feared that very scenario. In 1904, upon taking control of the canal zone, the US tried to prohibit anarchists migrating to Panama by passing an immigration law forbidding known anarchists.[63] Despite the anti-anarchism law, though, Spanish-speaking anarchists had arrived by 1906. They spread throughout the region in small groups, agitating against the US and for improved conditions.[64]

Labour and working conditions in the Canal Zone were notoriously dangerous, disease-ridden, and exacerbated by poor food. The majority of labourers (most Spaniards and Cubans as well as almost all workers from the West Indies) were paid on the "silver roll", a euphemism in which "non-white" and non-Anglo workers received poorer pay and conditions than white North American workers while doing the most dangerous tasks. In early 1907, Spaniards, including anarchists, began to agitate. Besides condemning the poor quality of food they received, they also began to question the utility of black West Indians in their midst. Some believed that employers brought in large numbers of mostly English-Creole speaking black workers to undermine labour unity and militancy as well as to drive down wage rates.[65]

While anarchists in the Canal Zone have been accused of being racist for making such accusations, one should be cautious in that assessment.[66] Anarchists were hostile not only to black workers, and not because they were black. West Indians tended to stay within their communities. Language differences obviously played a role in this, but these Antillean workers also tended to be more religious and conservative than their Spanish, and particularly anarchist, counterparts.[67]

Anarchists saw a number of inter-related issues here. First, they saw the arrival of ever-increasing numbers of workers as a plot by canal managers to undermine working-class unity and lower wages. Second, anarchists, who despised all organised religion, saw the Anglican, Episcopalian, Baptist and Catholic churches—all encouraged by the supervisory Isthmian Canal Commission (ICC) and widely attended by Antilleans—as corrupting influences. Anarchists would have criticized workers regardless of colour for attending them. Thus, workers organisations were undermined by cross-national problems, language divisions, black conservatism, and

[61] Luis Navas, *El movimiento obrero en Panamá (1880–1914)*, San José, Costa Rica: Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana, 1979, 120–125; Julie Greene, "Spaniards on the Silver Roll: Labour Troubles and Liminality in the Panama Canal Zone, 1904– 1914", *International Labour and Working Class History*, 66, 2004, 82.

[62] Angel Cappelletti, *Hechos y figuras del anarquismo hispanoamericano*, Madrid: Ediciones Madre Tierra, 1990, 41–42. Ironically, Bakunin saw Panama in his 1861 trip from Asia to London.

[63] Davíd Viñas, *Anarquistas en América Latina*, México, D.F.: Editorial Katun, 1983, 99.

[64] Greene, 92.

[65] Greene, 86.

[66] Greene, 92.

[67] Navas, 146–47; Michael Conniff, *Black Labour on a White Canal: Panama, 1904– 1981*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985, 38.

the elitism of North American workers who enjoyed better pay and conditions on the "gold roll". ICC repression, including deportation, further undermined working-class unity in the Canal Zone.[68] This was the environment that anarchists found themselves in as they attempted to form a movement.

In the wake of the 1907 strikes, anarchists began sending money to Havana to receive copies of *¡Tierra!*. With the contributions came correspondence outlining labour issues in Panama. The first communiqué from Panama to Havana described a recent meeting urging workers to demand the eight-hour, ten dollar day, with $16 for work on holidays. The author then denounced US canal labour recruiters who deliberately lied to workers in Spain by painting false scenarios of excellent working conditions. He then described police abuses directed at workers and US foremen who expelled workers from the job simply for smoking a cigar. Signed by 37 men, the letter urged *¡Tierra!*'s editors to notify Spanish anarchist papers and warn those "still in Spain with illusions of coming" to Panama that they could expect little but misery and abuse from Americans.[69]

From 1907 to 1911, Canal Zone anarchists had little organisational strength and the larger regional network was extremely tenuous, but that soon changed. In 1911, Aquilino López, a rising figure in Havana, left Cuba and went to Panama just as labour militancy again surged in the canal. That July, workers in the infamous Culebra Cut section of the canal—a particularly harrowing area of the construction project due to its susceptibility to sudden massive rock and mud slides—began protesting conditions and their American overseers. Sympathy strikes emerged elsewhere, especially among Spaniards who became targets of increased anarchist propaganda from a growing number of anarchist clubs that arose across the zone. López stepped into this mix, linking himself with the emerging clubs and especially Bernardo Pérez, the editor of the Colón-based anarchist newspaper, *El Único* ("The Only One").[70] While Pérez was a key agitator in the zone, López played the central role of reconnecting the regional anarchist network by utilizing his Havana connections to link the two locales' movements.

In Cuba, the movement had begun to diversify as anarchists in Havana published three newspapers. But it also fractured due to a series of personality and ideological disputes pitting groups linked to either *¡Tierra!* or *La Voz del Dependiente* ("The Assistant's Voice"), the anarcho-syndicalist paper of Havana's restaurant and café workers. Yet, the internal divisions in Havana had shifted this network. While *¡Tierra!* was the early recipient of Panamanian money and correspondence, López was one of those Cubans who deserted *¡Tierra!*. Those who split with *¡Tierra!* but stayed in Cuba began to publish *Vía Libre* ("Freedom's Way"), for which López wrote and sent columns from Panama.[71]

By August 1911, anarchist militancy had spread to such an extent throughout the Canal Zone that anarchists organised the Panamanian Isthmus Federation of Free Associations and Individuals (*Federación de Agrupaciones e Individuos Libres del Istmo de Panamá*). The federation claimed groups in Gatún, Punta del Toro, Corozal, Culebra, and Balboa, including nearly 120 individuals willing to sign a communiqué to be published in Havana. Meanwhile, López collected money for Havana's anarchist causes and *Vía Libre*. In fact, Panamanian-based anarchists were crucial

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[68] Navas, 160–161.

[69] *¡Tierra!*, September 7, 1907, 3.

[70] Greene, 90–92.

[71] *Vía Libre*, July 1, 1911, 3.

financial backers of *Vía Libre*. For instance, in August canal workers sent four times more money than Cubans to this Havana paper. López's transnational intermediacy explains this linkage.[72]

While links between Panama and *¡Tierra!* were nonexistent in the summer of 1911, by 1912 internal conflicts within Cuba were resolved, anarchists representing different groups reunited, and *¡Tierra!* reemerged as the voice of the circum-Caribbean network and an important venue for Panama's anarchists.[73] In 1912 some 4000 Spaniards remained in the Canal Zone, and anarchist activity continued at relatively high rates until early 1914 when construction concluded. From 1912–1913, anarchist activities centred around the *Grupo "Los Nada"* in Pedro Miguel and *Grupo "Libre Pensamiento"* ("Free Thought Group") in Gatún.[74]

While these groups continued to finance movement efforts in Cuba, anarchists were turning their attention to political and social issues in the Panamanian Republic itself. Braulio Hurtado critiqued Panamanian politics and the presidential election of Belisario Porras in 1912. For instance, just before Porras' inauguration in October 1912, Hurtado asked what the Panamanian government had done with the ten million dollars received from the US in exchange for the Canal Zone territory. The government had promised agricultural colonies, roads, and communication systems, but they were practically non-existent almost ten years after independence.[75] Porras' inauguration in October once again brought out Hurtado's bitter pen. The decline in canal jobs meant increased hardship for workers and families. Just as bad was the fate of workers who saw their wages cut from 16 to 13 cents an hour. In this light, Hurtado lamented the mass of people who had come to witness Porras' costly inauguration. As he walked to the event, he passed by doorways full of poor mothers and "anemic" children, while "those who cause such misery pass by in their automobiles and coaches".[76]

In the midst of this political critique, José Carrasco urged anarchists across the isthmus to organise workers centres. He saw a rise in the "spirit of rebellion" around him, thanks to the rise of new anarchist groups; it was time "that all of us, not a group of twenty or thirty *compañeros* [comrades] like we've had in the Canal Zone before, but a Workers Centre, that is, a resistance society … that guides man to be free and to have good health to combat the many evils that continually threaten their existence". In fact, a new Workers Centre in Gatún emerged by late 1912, contributing money to the cause, ordering newspapers from Havana, and offering funds for anarchist causes in Cuba and the US.[77] To Carrasco, this did more than just help workers. It showed "those barbaric misters of the North" that canal workers would stand up to North American despotism.

Smaller anarchist groups continued to operate in Ancón, Pedro Miguel, Culebra and Balboa throughout 1914, sending small sums of money but no correspondence to Cuba. On August 15, 1914, navigation on the Panama Canal formally commenced. In May, just three months before this historic date, the 39 year-old, Spanish anarchist author José María Blázquez de Pedro arrived in Panama at the invitation of one of the few remaining anarchist groups.[78] In July, he began

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[72] *Vía Libre*, August 5, 1911, 4.

[73] For the overall history of these Cuban divisions and the end of the divide, see the author's *Anarchism and Countercultural Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba*, 178–83.

[74] Greene concludes, based on ICC records, that anarchism disappeared by 1912. Greene, 93–94.

[75] *¡Tierra!*, September 7, 1912, 4.

[76] *¡Tierra!*, October 19, 1912, 2.

[77] *¡Tierra!*, October 19, 1912, 4; November 23, 1912, 3.

[78] Hernando Franco Múñoz, *Blázquez de Pedro y los orígenes del sindicalismo panameño*, online at bdigital.binal.ac.pa/bdp/tomos/XXIX/Tomo_XXIX_P2.pdf, accessed April 3, 2007, 173.

communicating with Havana. His first *¡Tierra!* columns sewed the seeds for later years of Panamanian activism when he attacked the political process. "Without the patriotic, the religious, the governmental and the providers of alcohol, how few ballots would be cast into the ballot boxes in every country!"[79] These columns marked the beginning of an eleven-year stint in which Blázquez de Pedro commented on Panamanian political and social reality from an anarchist perspective, while fruitlessly struggling to create a labour federation and anarchocommunist movement. In 1925, his efforts earned him deportation to Cuba. Within two years, both Blázquez de Pedro and Panamanian anarchism were dead.[80]

Anarchism in Mexico and the Southwestern US: The Trans-Mexican Network

Anarchist traditions both originated in and were imported to Mexico. Ricardo Flores Magón was a Oaxacan-born anarcho-communist who, with the aid of several comrades like Práxedis Guerrero, Librado Rivera, Anselmo Figueroa, and Ricardo's brother Enrique, comprised the revolutionary core of the PLM that published the long-running newspaper *Regeneración* from US locations in Texas, Missouri and finally California. The PLM's anarchism blended with traditional political liberalism until 1911 when it published a new manifesto declaring war against political authority, property and religion, while proclaiming "Land and Liberty".[81]

Anarcho-syndicalism also prospered in Mexico's industrial urban centres and oil fields along the Gulf of Mexico. Spanish immigrants introduced this line of thought in the late 1800s. By 1912, Mexico's House of the Workers of the World (*Casa del Obrero Mundial*, COM or *Casa*) began organising industrial workers around the country. The IWW worked closely with the *Casa* to organise workers in the Gulf cities of Tampico and Veracruz. Throughout the 1910s and early 1920s, the IWW organised Mexican workers in the mining centres of Northern Mexico and the US Southwest, especially Arizona.[82] Meanwhile, the IWW worked with the PLM, serving as a transnational organisation linking radicals across North America.[83]

Ricardo Flores Magón grew up in a peasant community, witnessing communal work and distribution patterns. By 1900, he had studied law, been a school teacher, lost his teaching job for criticizing Dictator Porfirio Díaz, and begun reading Kropotkin, Bakunin and Malatesta. The Flores Magón brothers began publishing *Regeneración* in Mexico City. The paper facilitated the rise of anti-dictatorial, anti-clerical Liberal clubs, which Díaz widely suppressed. In January 1904, the brothers, their wives, and a handful of comrades fled to San Antonio, Texas, and began to re-

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[79] *¡Tierra!*, July 16, 1914, 2 and July 23, 1914, 2 (quote from the latter).

[80] Franco Múñoz, 199.

[81] Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*, London: Harper Collins, 1992, 510; Donald Hodges, *Mexican Anarchism after the Revolution*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995, 11; Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Sembradores. Ricardo Flores Magón y el Partido Liberal Mexicano: A Eulogy and Critique*, Monograph No. 5, Los Angeles: Aztlan Publications, Chicano Studies Centre, UCLA, 1973, 120–124.

[82] Norman Caulfield, *Mexican Workers and the State: From the Porfiriato to NAFTA*, Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1998, 20–43.

[83] W. Dirk Raat, *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903–1923*, College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1981, 40–62.

publish *Regeneración.* They soon moved the paper to St. Louis and ultimately to Los Angeles in the summer 1907.[84]

[84] Ward Albro, *Always a Rebel: Ricardo Flores Magón and the Mexican Revolution*, Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1992, 7–80. See also David Poole (ed.), *Land and Liberty: Anarchist Influences in the Mexican Revolution: Ricardo Flores Magón*, Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1977, 8–16; Marshall, 510–11; Salvador Hernández Padilla, *El magonismo: Historia de una pasión libertaria, 1900–1922*, Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1984/1988, 13–135; and Ricardo Cuahtémoc Esparza Valdiva, *El fenómeno magonista en México y en Estados Unidos, 1905–1908*, Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas, 2000.

Fig. 8. Ricardo Flores Magón and Enrique Flores Magón, Mexican anarchists, at the Los Angeles County Jail, 1916.

From St. Louis and Los Angeles, the PLM leadership coordinated armed operations throughout Mexico and the US Southwest between 1905 and 1911, including labour uprisings in the Cananea copper mines of Sonora, Mexico and along the Texas-Mexico border in 1906, as well as strike activities and armed raids throughout Mexico from 1907–08.[85] By November 1910, PLM forces were fighting throughout Mexico. With the formal outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, but against Ricardo Flores Magón's wishes, Guerrero led twentytwo men into Mexico. To distinguish themselves from revolutionary leader Francisco Madero's army, Guerrero marched with a red flag emblazoned with the words "Land and Liberty". He was killed in December.[86]

By early 1911, the PLM joined with members of the IWW to invade and control part of the western Mexican state of Baja California. When Madero assumed the Mexican presidency in May, he considered the revolution over. Ricardo Flores Magón and the PLM, however, refused to recognize Madero. Such defiance saw *Regeneración*'s circulation soar to 27,000 in May. In response to the PLM refusal to lay down arms, Madero's forces attacked anarchists throughout Mexico, capturing, jailing and killing many. The PLM faced other hurdles in Baja California as well. Because the Flores Magóns were not in Baja, they could not easily coordinate actions nor find enough money to entice settlers to organise agricultural coops. The existence of such a settlement plan raised concerns from Madero that the PLM wanted to separate Baja California from Mexico, prompting Madero to respond with more force. By July, Madero's men had driven the PLM from the state.

Besides the Madero government's actions, other factors undermined PLM-IWW efforts in northern Mexico. Ethnic tensions emerged between the mostly white Wobblies and the PLM Mexicans—a situation that reflected how fragile the theory of anarchist internationalism could be when put in place on the ground among different ethnic groups who had only limited understanding of each other's culture and language.[87]

Ricardo Flores Magón's actions in Mexico clearly illustrated that he had moved beyond simple liberalism. In September 1911, he issued a new manifesto explicitly laying out his anarcho-communist principles and the PLM's opposition to all authority and private property. Before this time, Flores Magón and *Regeneración* had been key sources of information about Mexico for the US Left. As a result, the broad spectrum of the Left had come to his aid, even helping to raise money for his bail and court appearances. With the PLM now explicitly supporting armed revolution, rejecting politics, and promoting anarcho-communism, US socialists such as the editors of *The New York Call* and Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs abandoned their support. Emma Goldman and the IWW remained solid backers, though, even as the US government began concerted efforts against anarchists around the country. From 1912 until his death in November 1922 in the US federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, Ricardo Flores Magón felt the full weight of US law enforcement, spending long stretches of time in local jails and federal facilities.

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[85] Ratt, 17–18.

[86] Ward Albro, *To Die on Your Feet: The Life, Times, and Writings of Práxedis G. Guerrero*, Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1996, 38–64; Eugenio Martínez Núñez, *Perfiles Revolucionarios: La vida heróica de Práxedis G. Guerrero*, Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1960, 222–37.

[87] Poole, 20–23 and 136; Hernández Padilla, 136–65.

With the PLM leadership on trial or in jail off and on over this time, new editors continued to publish *Regeneración*, dedicating each issue to extensive coverage of the Mexican Revolution and critiquing US socialist and governmental assaults against the PLM. During this time, the editor of the paper's English-language page four suggested to US socialists that Mexicans needed socialist support. W.C. Owen urged socialists to recognize the latent radicalism inherent in the Mexicans' condition. As he put it, "until you recognize that the Mexicans have in their veins approximately three-fourths of Indian to one-fourth of Spanish blood; and until you remind yourself that even the United States failed to subdue the Indian to industrial slavery", Mexicans would continue to fight on their own and against huge odds for their freedom.[88] In January 1912 he published a pamphlet on the Mexican Revolution where he again re-emphasized this point, praising the Yaqui for having "waged bitter war for the return of their lands under the Díaz regime".[89] He further emphasized the anarchist qualities of Mexicans, who "true to the promptings of his Indian blood, loathes centralized authority, detests the soldier, regards the rent collector and the tax-gatherer as robbers, and looks with profound suspicion on all who appear to be making a living without occupying themselves in productive labour".[90]

Owen's use of "Indianness" as a synonym for rebelliousness deserves some consideration in terms of the relationship between ethnicity and anarchist internationalism. Owen seems to have been drawing on the history of indigenous rebellions against Anglo, Hispanic and Mexican colonizers, especially in the late 19th century. During that time Yaqui and Apache indigenous resistance on both sides of the US-Mexico border resulted in accurate perceptions that these were indeed fiercely independent peoples, whose "inclination"—along with those of Mexicans of mixed race (Indian and white)—"is naturally and strongly toward the free communistic life to which the full-blooded Indians are wedded".[91]

Or put another way and in anarchist terms resembling Bakunin's ideas, they embodied nationalities seeking to be free and self-governing, willing to use violence to preserve their autonomy. In a sense, just as different social actors could claim that indigenous peoples were blood thirsty, or satanic, or backward, Owen claimed these peoples' identities for the larger anarchist project of federalism and internationalism; that is, 'Indians' rebelled against colonization in order to be a free people in the larger international project to free all peoples from tyranny.

Such anarchist optimism in California was buttressed, at least initially, by the arrival in Los Angeles of Juan Francisco Moncaleano and his wife Blanca in 1913. He had been a teacher in Colombia before arriving in Havana. Both taught in Havana's anarchist schools, but the attraction of the Mexican Revolution led him to leave Cuba in 1912 and travel to Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula to help establish a rationalist school there. He soon proceeded to Mexico City where he briefly influenced the radical bent of the *Casa*.[92] Husband and wife reunited in early 1913 in Los Angeles, where they helped to open a rationalist school in the new House of the International Worker (*Casa del Obrero Internacional*).[93]

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[88] *Regeneración*, August 5, 1911, 4.

[89] W.C. Owen, "The Mexican Revolution: Its Progress, Causes, Purpose and Probable Results", Los Angeles: *Regeneración*, 1912, 3.

[90] Owen, 5.

[91] Owen, 5.

[92] Shaffer, 176–84; James Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan de San Diego, 1904–1923*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992, 135; John Hart, Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class, 1860–1931(Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), 111–14.

[93] *Regeneración*, Feb. 15, 1913, 1.

But this reunion, and the resumption of their anarchist activities on the US west coast, sparked controversy. Juan Francisco Moncaleano proved a divisive force among Los Angeles-based anarchists. In May 1913, *Regeneración*'s editors accused the Moncaleanos and others of trying to take over the paper and make it the official publication of the Casa, not the PLM.[94] The editors levelled a series of charges against J.F. Moncaleano, including embezzling Casa funds and of molesting young girls. The international movement soon became involved. In July, *¡Tierra!* criticized *Regeneración*'s editors for resorting to personal attacks that sullied the anarchist cause. The Cuban paper then suspended its activities collecting money for *Regeneración.*

The Los Angeles paper responded that Havana readers could continue to submit money for the PLM by sending it to the Havana-based José Pujal, a regular contributor of pro-PLM columns from Cuba.[95] Then, a letter from Havana anarchist Santiago Sánchez said he was convinced that Moncaleano never truly believed in rationalist education and charged that Moncaleano had behaved inappropriately with children in Havana's schools too.[96] In their defence, the Moncaleanos denounced the PLM, accusing the Magonistas of passivity, not doing enough to lead workers to liberty, and squandering $500,000 in international donations destined for the PLM. When the Flores Magón brothers were arrested, the local IWW Spanish-language paper *El Rebelde* ("The Rebel") ignored their plight and offered no support because the Moncaleanos had gained important editorial influence over that paper.[97]

Other controversies hampered the movement. For instance, in 1911 Rafael Romero Palacios lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he collected money for the PLM. As such, Romero Palacios played a role that other anarchist sympathizers around the various networks also played: collecting donations from local activists and mailing the money in weekly.[98] In July 1911, he arrived in Los Angeles to help run *Regeneración* after a series of arrests landed PLM leaders in jail.[99] However, by 1913, Romero Palacios earned the PLM's scorn when it accused him of stealing money from the paper.[100] When he moved to New York and became involved with that city's *Cerebro y Fuerza* ("Brains and Brawn"), the PLM openly criticized both. When he moved to Tampa, *Regeneración* announced this to its readers, especially to those readers in Tampa, warning them to watch out for Romero Palacios.[101]

While the PLM in both Mexico and Los Angeles began fracturing in the 1910s, even though *Regeneración* continued irregular publication until 1918, other Mexican and Spanish-language anarchist activities emerged along the US-Mexico border. The most notable was also the most ignored by the Flores Magóns: the Plan of San Diego (PSD) in southern Texas in 1915. By 1914, Mexicans and Texans of Mexican descent had organised 165 Magonista clubs in the two southernmost counties of Texas (Cameron and Hidalgo counties). Talk of a plan emanated from the small community of San Diego, Texas where a PLM group had existed for five years among the 2500 mostly Mexicandescended, anti-American residents.

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94 *Regeneración*, May 10, 1913, 3; June 7, 1913, 3; June 21, 1913, 3.

95 *Regeneración* August 2, 1913, 2.

96 *Regeneración*, August 9, 1913, 2. Blanca mostly escaped this controversy and began publishing a short-lived anarcho-feminist paper in Los Angeles. See, for instance, Pluma Roja, November 5, 1913.

97 Sandos, 135–37.

98 *Regeneración*, March 18, 1911, 3.

99 *Regeneración*, July 8, 1911, 3.

100 *Regeneración*, August 16, 1913, 3.

101 *Regeneración*, February 21, 1914, 3. In 1920, Palacios remained in Tampa and was a regular contributor of money to Puerto Rico's *El Comunista.*

The original plan called for an armed uprising against the United States in order to reclaim Mexican lands lost to the US in the 1840s. No white members were allowed to take part as the rebels were to enact a race war against Yankee Anglos. However, the plan lacked followers among Texans themselves until it was modified to reflect larger anarcho-communist goals along the lines of those promoted by the PLM, including proclamation of a "social revolution" embracing all exploited peoples, promotion of workers' dignity, land redistribution, communal sharing of the tools of production without racial or nationalist distinction, and creation of Modern Schools.[102] On July 4, 1915 (US Independence Day), PSD violence erupted when forty Mexicans crossed the international border and killed two Anglos.

The violence escalated over much of the next year, with railroad bridges burned to the ground, passenger trains derailed, people of all ethnicities killed, Anglo vigilante violence erupting across southern Texas, and as much as 40 percent of the Mexican population of these counties fleeing the region.[103] By the summer of 1916, anarchist violence on both sides of the border presented real problems to the presidencies of Venustiano Carranza in Mexico and Woodrow Wilson in Washington. In the following two years, both Mexico and the US unleashed the full weight of government repression against anarchists within their borders, effectively crushing the PSD.[104] Oddly enough, this PLM-inspired rebellion occurred without the support of Ricardo Flores Magón, who seems to have paid virtually no attention to the PSD movement in Mexico and Texas that rebelled in his name.[105]

At the same time, the IWW made transnational linkages within USbased Mexican communities and across the US-Mexico border. Since 1911, the IWW had commissioned Spanish-language newspapers, including *El Obrero Industrial* ("The Industrial Worker") (Tampa), *Cultura Obrera* ("Workers' Culture", New York), *La Unión Industrial* ("The Industrial Union, Phoenix), and *Huelga General* ("General Strike", Los Angeles). In 1911, as the PLM and IWW engaged in cross-border actions into Mexico, the presses exchanged columns. For instance, following Guerrero's death at the end of 1910, the Phoenix paper published Ricardo Flores Magón's tribute to Guerrero that urged readers "to take the flag of the dispossessed from our dead hero's hands … and continue the fight against the capitalist oppressor and the hated political despotism".[106]

Wobblies also worked closely with the anarcho-syndicalist *Casa* in Mexico City and beyond. Begun in the summer of 1912, the anarchosyndicalist Casa reflected a growing trend toward radicalism among much of the capital's working class. The Casa functioned in the same spirit as most anarchist centres in Latin America by holding weekly public meetings, operating night schools, opening a library, and reaching out to non-anarchist intellectuals. However, the Casa early on refrained from openly criticizing Madero's new revolutionary government, fearing that such public hostility would lead to government repression—as had been the case when Moncaleano criticized Madero and found himself deported.[107] In 1913, the *Casa's* organisational successes in the capital led to the creation of new anarchist groups around the country. These groups in places like the northern city of Monterrey, the western city of Guadalajara, and the Gulf Coast city of Tampico would be self-governing locals with national representation in Mexico City. By using

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[102] Sandos, 77–83.
[103] Sandos, 87–110.
[104] Sandos, 154–71.
[105] Sandos, 100.
[106] *La Unión Industrial*, January 14, 1911, pgs. 1–2.
[107] Sandos, 112; Hart, 114–15.

anarcho-syndicalist direct action tactics, the *Casa* quickly grew into the main labour organisation in revolutionary Mexico.[108]

While the influence of the *Casa* reached out to industrial pockets of Mexico like the factories of Monterrey or the oil fields of the Gulf Coast, the *Casa* also made connections with the IWW. The *Casa's* newspaper *Ariete* ("Battering Ram") reprinted IWW articles, and the two joined efforts to organise oil workers in Tampico, even sharing the same building. In 1916, IWW organiser Pedro Coria travelled from the recently organised mines of Arizona to the Mexican port city of Tampico, where he helped found IWW Local 100. Since the AFL generally refused to organise foreign-born workers in the US Southwest, this left union efforts open to the IWW. By 1917, 5,000 Mexicans working in the US belonged to IWW locals.[109]

The years between 1913 and 1916 were particularly difficult for the Mexican anarchists. First, they had to confront US military intervention along the Gulf Coast in 1914. Following the assassination of Madero, the Casa subtly and then more openly attacked the successor government of Victoriano Huerta. Angered by Huerta's actions against the US and his purchase of arms from Germany, the US proceeded to occupy the port of Veracruz from April to July. While the *Casa* remained politically neutral and spoke little officially about the US occupation, Ricardo Flores Magón and the PLM refused to be silent. *Regeneración* railed against US imperialism and the Mexican revolutionary forces of Venustiano Carranza and Pancho Villa who stood the most to gain from the US further destabilizing Huerta.

The paper urged Mexicans to resist the invaders, fearing that the occupation of Veracruz was but the first step in a larger Wilsonian design to crush the Mexican Revolution. Flores Magón further urged the international anarchist community to condemn the invasion and offer international assistance to Mexican anarchists. Unfortunately, his appeal fell on near deaf ears. In June 1914, by the time the International Anarchist Congress met in London to consider the Mexican request, another international crisis appeared: the assassination in Sarajevo of an Austrian prince. The international anarchist movement now had to deal with the outbreak of continental war and the impact of nationalism. Mexico fell out of focus.[110]

A second and related dilemma confronting Mexican anarchists lay in the last months of Huerta's rule. Huerta had found himself fighting off revolutionaries in the north and south of Mexico as well as responding to an increasingly radicalized urban working class, especially in the capital. Through arrests, deportations, and destruction of *Casa* facilities, Huerta suppressed the *Casa* during the summer of 1914 until he himself was forced to flee power with the arrival of a new president, Venustiano Carranza.[111]

Carranza's arrival then created a third dilemma for anarchists: whether to go against their first principles of entirely avoiding politics or join forces with Carranza. They joined Carranza, who allowed the *Casa* to organise labour along anarcho-syndicalist lines and even offered resources if the *Casa* would fill the ranks of the army to fight the revolutionaries of Emiliano Zapata in the south and Pancho Villa in the north. *Casa* leaders agreed, seeing the Zapatistas as weak, isolated and religiously superstitious on one hand and the Villistas as too associated with their strongman leader who anarchists viewed as a political despot. Thus, on February 20, 1915—the date the PSD was revised to become more anarchistic—the anarcho-syndicalist *Casa* joined the

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[108] Hart, 116–18, 127.
[109] Caulfield, 20–32.
[110] Sandos, 51–52.
[111] Hart, 118–25.

government by forming six Red Battalions.[112] The move infuriated the Magonistas, who urged Mexicans to continue fighting the social revolution, support the rural peasantry, and turn their weapons against Carranza. The *Casa* in turn denounced the PLM as out of touch and refused to make official contact between the two groups.[113]

Yet, unofficial connections did exist between PLM and *Casa*-affiliated groups, especially along the US-Mexico border. By late 1915, little armed conflict remained in central Mexico; the Red Battalions had done their job against Carranza's foes. As a result, the government gradually disbanded anarchist soldiers. Some former soldiers soon arrived at the *Casa* in Monterrey, talking with other demobilized soldiers and peasants, as well as industrial and railroad workers while looking for work themselves.

At this time, PSD-related violence and Anglo revenge killings of Mexicans had spread along the US side of the border, angering many in the *Casa*. In response, the Monterrey Casa became a recruiting ground for those looking for volunteers to fight for the PSD. Anarcho-communist followers of the PSD joined former *Casa* anarcho-syndicalists in raids targeting mainly white Americans while aligning Mexicans with Mexican-Americans. In this sense, anarchist internationalism did span the political border of the US and Mexico, but this "internationalism" was infused with an emerging sense of "Mexican" national identity that was being forged by the Mexican Revolution as well as growing ethnic hatred for North American whites in Texas. Fearful of the *Casa's* growing strength throughout Mexico, Carranza eventually crushed the Casa by August 1916. Tellingly, the first *Casa* branch closed by the government was in Monterrey in October 1915 as Carranza struggled to get the upper hand against anarchists by depriving PSD supporters of a government-backed labour organisation.[114]

Soon after, anarchist groups in Mexico City regrouped their efforts. In late 1918, large contingents of Mexico City workers still embraced facets of libertarian thought. These workers from urban trades like bakers, telephone employees, chauffeurs, and tram workers joined forces with elements of Mexico's Marxist movements to create the Great Central Body of Workers (*Gran Cuerpo Central de Trabajadores*) as a way to counter the *Confederación Regional de Obreros Mexicanos* (the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers or CROM), the new official union of the Mexican state.

At the same time, the IWW in Mexico struggled to stay alive by allying with Mexican anarcho-syndicalists from the Great Central Body of Workers to form the General Confederation of Workers (*Confederación General de Trabajadores*, or CGT) in 1921.[115] In part, the creation of the CGT was prompted by another transnational labour development: the AFL had allied with the CROM—seeking to create a reformist-oriented Pan-American labour federation. The Spanishspeaking leader of the AFL push was none other than the Puerto Rican former anarchist Santiago Iglesias, who had caused that island's anarchists so much grief.

By 1918, though, authorities were crushing transnational anarchism in the US and Mexico. US government Red Scare tactics suppressed IWW activities in the US Southwest and led to the closing of *Regeneración*. Meanwhile, Ricardo Flores Magón languished in prison, and the Mexican *Casa* had been closed for two years. Soon, even Mexican president Alvaro Obregón

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[112] Sandos, 112–13; Hart, 127–33.

[113] Hernández Padilla, 198–99; Sandos, 113; Hart, 129.

[114] Sandos, 132–33; Hart, 136–55.

[115] Barry Carr, "Marxism and Anarchism in the Formation of the Mexican Communist Party, 1910–19", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 63: 2, 1983, 288–89.

launched his own Red Scare against radicals by invoking an article of the constitution allowing for the deportation of dangerous foreigners. While scattered anarchists tried to agitate around the country by the mid-1920s, the Mexican government had effectively undermined anarchist momentum.[116]

While anarchist organs declined during the 1920s, libertarian impulses continued to emerge, especially within the Mexican Communist Party (PCM). Here, radical workers in the party battled Marxists on the direction of the party. For instance, Marxists were inclined to work in a United Front strategy with the CROM, following directions from the Communist International (Comintern). In addition, Marxists within the party were likely to support engaging in parliamentary politics. Radical workers, building off of libertarian principles, challenged Marxists on both principles, thus keeping alive an anarchist spirit within the early PCM into the early 1930s.[117]

Conclusion: transnational anarchist networks in tropical North America

The previous sections address key issues surrounding the development of Spanish-speaking anarchist movements throughout the Caribbean, southern US and Mexico as well as how relationships between the movements facilitated their rise and operation. By way of conclusion, it is useful to compare some of these transnational linkages to illustrate how those believing in and framing the struggle of international anarchism actually put in place their ideals by forming transnational networks. Just as important is to understand the important dilemmas that internationalists encountered in the face of nationalist concerns— conflicts that arose even within some anarchist groups.

What emerges is a re-evaluation of anarchism in the northern hemisphere of the Americas. "National" and "local" movements arose to challenge specific national and local issues. Yet, each movement found itself an active part of a larger regional network that frequently depended on links in the network for people, information, and money. The Caribbean network saw anarchists, their correspondence, and their finances moving back and forth between Cuba and Panama, Cuba and Florida, Puerto Rico and Cuba, and Puerto Rico and Florida. Meanwhile, trans-border organisations in the US and Mexico established a Mexican network. In addition, anarchist newspapers and fundraising activities moved between these two networks, as did anarchists themselves, including people like Romero Polacios from the Mexican network to the Caribbean and J.F. and Blanca Moncaleano from the Caribbean to the Mexican.

In Cuba and Puerto Rico, the US military and political presence provided an anti-imperialist foil for anarchists. Likewise, the expansion of AFL-linked labour unions and the proletarianisation of the cigar and sugar industries of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Florida by US-dominated entities were points around which anarchists collectively lamented and rallied against. The US creation of the Panama Canal Zone in 1904 and the subsequent ten-year construction project to build the canal provided a new venue for anarchists to migrate and in which to agitate, critiquing working

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[116] Caulfield, 36–52. This is not the same as saying that anarchist tendencies disappeared from Mexico after the mid-1920s. Anarchists and anarchist tendencies would influence the development of the Mexican Communist Party in the 1920s, and Enrique Flores Magón played a role in this development.

[117] Carr, 300–05.

conditions, immigration issues and US oversight, while organising a workers centre and a short-lived newspaper.

Anarchists in the US Southwest likewise encountered US government attempts to rein in radical activity, especially as US-based anarchists joined cross-border raids into Mexico and Mexican-based anarchists raided Texas during the Mexican Revolution. Not a few anarchists fell victim to US "neutrality laws" for involving themselves in Mexican affairs. US government surveillance monitored anarchist activity in all of these locales too. In the US, Latin American and Spanish anarchists within the networks faced the added hurdle of being labelled "dangerous foreigners"—non-English-speaking and often non-white radicals—at a time in US history when racial segregation in the southern US enjoyed constitutional protection and anarchism was increasingly viewed as an imported, un-American ideology. Actions of Tampa's white Citizens Committee against foreign anarchists as well as perceived racial abuses by Anglos against Mexicans in Texas became important racial concerns that found expression in the international anarchist press. As these papers circulated throughout the networks, anarchists elsewhere became aware of and compared US social, political and racial attitudes—portrayals and analyses that became important information for potential future migrants to these areas.

In fact, the networks' primary features must be seen in how they facilitated communication and financial flows as well as how these networks contributed to organising efforts within each link of the network. During this period, dozens of anarchist periodicals arose in these various locales, but only two had the longevity and reach necessary to provide long-term linkages. Havana's *¡Tierra!* and the PLM's Los Angeles-based *Regeneración* were the key communication vehicles within and between these two networks. This is not to say that anarchists did not operate independently or outside of the influence of these two periodicals. They did. However, these two newspapers remained central cohesive organs to unite, link and coordinate—as much as possible—small anarchist groups spread across vast reaches of tropical North America.

First, international correspondents kept Havana and Los Angeles informed of events around the networks, helping anarchists in Cuba and within the PLM to gain an international consciousness of the movement and the issues it faced elsewhere. In this way, for instance, Cuban anarchists followed the Mexican Revolution, devoting issue after issue in 1910 and 1911 to correspondence from the PLM and raising money to be sent to anarchist groups fighting the revolution. This actually had at least one debilitating effect when Cuban anarchists began to raise more money to be sent to the Mexicans rather than use the money to build and finance anarchist schools from 1910–1913—a financial factor in the collapse of the Cuban school movement. Second, because most of the networks' nodes were small, there was rarely enough stability or money to publish local anarchist papers. As a result, anarchists in Florida, Puerto Rico, Arizona, Panama and elsewhere often communicated with their own movements and potential followers by sending columns to *¡Tierra!* and *Regeneración*. These papers published the columns and sent the papers to the locales from which the columns originated—often with a one to two-week turnaround. In this way, Canal Zone anarchists communicated with followers in the Canal Zone, Puerto Rico's anarchists with Puerto Ricans, Arizonan anarchists with Arizonans.

Third, the newspapers became central financial hubs of the networks. Money flowed from throughout the Caribbean to Havana just as money flowed from the US-Mexico borderlands into Los Angeles. However, after the creation of the *Casa* in 1912, Mexican money was increasingly diverted to Mexico City. Financial flows not only were crucial to sustain the papers but often those who sent money dedicated extra funds to support specific international anarchist causes.

For instance, network money arrived in Havana where it was collected and sent to Mexican groups fighting the revolution or to families of anarchists left behind after a father was deported or jailed.

Ultimately, it remains important to understand the rise of anarchist movements and the nuances of each locale in shaping those movements. Plus, because anarchists considered themselves 'internationalists,' one must consider how anarchists operated internationally and how local movements arose with support of and links to these networks. The key is to trace the networks that anarchists developed and maintained for the flow of people, ideas and money that were essential in the organisational efforts to create local movements. As international capitalism and an expanding US penetrated tropical North America in the first decades of the 1900s, anarchists found themselves following international capital flows and engaging in transnational libertarian struggles in Florida, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama, Mexico and the US Southwest.

While anarchists laboured to implement their internationalist ideals, they nevertheless faced certain hurdles, not the least of which involved conflicts between "foreign" idealism and "nationalistic" apprehension. To be sure, many anarchists crossed political borders to organise new groups, spread the word of anarchy, raise money, and start newspapers. They met with other anarchists who migrated to an area and intermixed with anarchists native to that locale. Movements benefited from the infusion of these "pernicious foreigners" as well as the communiqués, correspondence and funds that arrived from throughout the networks.

However, despite the rhetoric of internationalism, anarchists nevertheless could be stifled by lingering nationalist and ethnic tensions within the broader society and even within the developing movements. For instance, tensions between Spaniards and Cubans in both Florida and Cuba lingered after Cuba's independence war. In Florida alone, anarchists confronted the stigma of being labelled "Spaniards", "anarchists" and "dangerous foreigners" by white citizens groups and even more mainstream labour groups affiliated with the 'American' AFL. In Panama, Spanish anarchists failed to bring black Antillean workers into their groups and seemed to have little success in attracting Panamanians who lived and worked outside of the Canal Zone in Panama proper. Finally, Anglo-Mexican tensions could flare between the PLM and IWW as they did in Baja California in 1911 or with the "Mexican" anarchists uniting against Texas exploiters along the border in 1915 during the PSD.

To some extent, those anarchists who followed Bakunin's reasoning could not escape this tension. The idea of freeing nationalities as part of a global anarchist revolution to allow all peoples to live autonomously meant that when outsiders arrived to help with that revolutionary experiment, they faced the challenge of being seen as just that: outsiders who knew neither the people nor culture, or who perhaps were viewed as taking jobs from the very people they came to organise. Such tensions existed throughout the networks, though Puerto Rico seems to have been mostly immune to this; instead, anarchists there found themselves battling AFL "internationalism".

These tensions were amplified by severe restrictions and constant surveillance by US postal inspectors, private security agents in the US, US and Cuban military intelligence and Mexican consuls. All of these institutions shared information and worked together across borders to battle the spread of anarchist internationalism. If one believes that governments have limited resources and thus must choose where to spend those resources, then an understanding of this international—especially US—surveillance underscores that elements in the respective power structures were sufficiently fearful of these movements and networks to spend precious time and money to track

and suppress them. Thus, anarchist internationalism faced the twin hurdles of fighting lingering nationalism of workers as well as national and international law enforcement efforts of the US and its regional allies. That anarchist networks functioned as long as they did and reached with such breadth across vast geographical regions is testimony to those hundreds of activists who lived their internationalist ideals.

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Straddling the Nation and the Working World:
Anarchism and syndicalism on the docks and rivers of Argentina, 1900–1930

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Under anarcho-syndicalist influence, Argentine waterfront unionism in early 20th century weathered fierce repression, confronted modern forms of industrial organisation and State bureaucratization with an ongoing predilection for union democracy and autonomy, and contributed to the integration of foreign and native-born workers into class-based expressions of social citizenship.[1] The historiography of organised labour in Argentina has generally assumed the decline if anarchism's relevance following 1910, and noted the ascendancy of syndicalist forms of organisation, particularly among railway and maritime workers, prior to the emergence, first of socialist and communist industrial unions in the mid-1930s, then of state-sponsored collective bargaining under the hegemony of Peronist politics during industrialization in the 1940s and 1950s.[2]

The case of longshoremen and mariners in the coastwise merchant marine, however, suggests that anarchist traditions continued for decades to make their mark. Indeed, I will argue that they permeated syndicalist practices in the country's ports, particularly in Buenos Aires; even when craft-based resistance societies and industrial unions clashed, sometimes violently, over ideology and tactics. Among these workers the discourse of Argentine labour nationalism was forged in an environment of fierce anarchist-inspired opposition to nativist and ethnically divisive projec-

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[1] A general overview of the larger anarchist and syndicalist movement in Argentina is provided in the introductory chapter—*the editors.*

[2] Rubén Eduardo Bittloch, *La théorie de la violence dans l'anarchisme argentin, 1890–1910*, Mémoire de Diplôme, Paris: École des Hautes Études de Sciences Sociales, 1982; Guy Bourdé, *La Classe ouvrière argentine* (3 vols.) Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987; Martín Casaretto, *Historia del movimiento obrero argentino* (2 vols.), Buenos Aires: Imprenta Lorenzo, 1947; Sebastián Marotta, *El movimiento sindical argentino. Sugénesis y desarrollo, 1857–1907* (3 vols.), Buenos Aires: El Lacio, 1960–70; Hiroshi Matsushita, *Movimiento obrero argentino, 1930–1945. sus proyecciones en los orígenes del peronismo*, Buenos Aires: Siglo Veinte, 1983; Jacinto Oddone, *Gremialismo proletario argentino*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Libera, 1949; Marcelo Segall, "Europeos en la iniciación del sindicalismo latinoamericano", in Magnus Morner et al. (eds.), *Capitales, empresarios y obreros europeos en América latina*, vol. 1, Stockholm: Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos de la Universidad de Estocolmo, 1983; Jorge Solomonoff, *Ideologías del movimiento obrero y conflicto social: de la organización nacional a la primera guerra mundial*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Proyección, 1971; David Tamarin, *The Argentine Labour Movement, 1930–1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1985; Juan Carlos Torre, *Le role du syndicalisme dans les origines du Péronisme*, Thèse de 3ème Cycle, Paris: École des Hautes Études de Sciences Sociales, 1982; Gonzalo Zaragoza Rivera, *Orígen del anarquismo en Buenos Aires, 1886–1901*, Ph.D. diss., Universidad de Valencia, 1972, and Zaragoza Rivera, *Anarquismo argentino (1876–1902)*, Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1996.

tions of working-class identity. Throughout the entire period leading up to the Second World War, waterfront unions articulated class-based expressions of unity in the context of recurrent strike movements that tested the resilience of hallmark anarchist themes such as autonomy from the State, federalist networking, direct action, cross-national solidarity, and counter-cultural community activism.

Anarchism: extraneous to the Americas?

While writers such as David Viñas[3] and José Arico[4] have criticized the tendency of left-wing and populist traditions to discount the fluid articulation of anarchist ideas with *creole* discourses and aspirations, many historians continue to dismiss the ideology as an import maladjusted to the realities of the American continent. The most sophisticated social historian of Argentine anarchism to date, whose narrative of its cultural dimensions is solidly based in archival research, concludes that it was an impoverished and ideologically incoherent ideology centred on spectacular protest and the short-term satisfaction of working-class demands, one that fuelled the flames of disillusionment, frustration, and resentment among disenfranchised European immigrants in America.[5]

It was a "militancy of urgency", a "manichean system of thought", that held "national specificities" in disdain, privileged action over analysis, substituted ethics and sentimentalism for a program, rejected "the native", and failed to rally workers massively because of its elitist approach to popular culture.[6] Suriano's unsurpassed work does not focus on a particular group of workers, nor is it restricted to manifestations of anarchism within organised labour; indeed, it examines a broad slice of *porteña* (port) society and ends intentionally in 1910.

The present overview of the longshoremen's and maritime workers' movements during the first three decades of the century, however, casts doubt on the often reiterated thesis that the European currents of thought associated with anarcho-syndicalism failed to durably establish themselves as meaningful national movements in Argentina; it belies their depiction as extraneous and ineffective.

By the time that the anarchist American Continental Workers' Association (*Asociación continental Americana de trabajadores*, part of the syndicalist International Workers Association) met in Buenos Aires in 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression and the 1930 military coup, delegates from Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Central America, and the Andes had developed a nuanced analysis of Latin American societies. They acknowledged political, economic and cultural differences between nations, calling for the study of indigenous and migratory antecedents, local and historical particularities, and working-class diversity. Their emphasis was on the preserving autonomy of local organisations as an antidote to the centralizing institutions of modern polities.

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[3] David Viñas, *Anarquistas en América Latina*, Mexico: Editorial Katún, 1983.

[4] José Aricó, *La hipótesis de Justo. Escritos sobre el socialismo en América*, Latina Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999.

[5] The assumptions underlying this thesis are common in the literature on immigra-tion and organised labour in Argentina. An early English-language articulation of it can be found in David Rock, *Politics in Argentina, 1890–1930: The Rise and Fall of Radicalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

[6] Juan Suriano, *Anarquistas. Cultura política libertarian en Buenos Aires, 1890– 1910*, Buenos Aires: Manatial, 2001, 80–83, 87, 167.

They encouraged anarchists to develop "national movements" among the "peoples of America", to coordinate rural and urban protests, to seek regionalist solutions to the "agrarian question", and to combat foreign imperialism in all of its forms.[7] María Laura Moreno Sainz has argued in her "mythanalysis" of Argentine anarchism that it nourished its promethean discourse of emancipation with references to the heroic "gaucho" of the hinterland and to federalist campaigns against the centralization of the State, setting the oneiric stage for the Peronism of the 1940s by channelling immigrant working-class dreams and native popular traditions, through an integrative practice of direct action and trans-regional coordination of resistance societies.[8]

Much as Jacy Alves de Seixas demonstrated in the Brazilian case, anarchist and syndicalist labour movements in Argentina played an assimilating, integrative and unifying role among heterogeneous and geographically dispersed nuclei of workers whom national political institutions and partisan ideological appeals excluded from power and representation.[9] Because of their unparalleled ability to upset the fluidity of commerce and frontally challenge the nation's largest agroexport concerns, and given the international resonance of their movements, organised longshoremen and mariners played a critical role in articulating this continental anarchist agenda. The experience of their unions, forged in struggle and tested over time, is of interest not just as curiosity of pre-industrial activism, but as a meaningful chapter in the development of modern forms of Argentine labour organisation and social radicalism.

Argentina: locating protest on the littoral

Argentine longshoremen were the largest working-class movement within the anarcho-syndicalist Regional Workers' Federation of Argentina (*Federación obrera regional argentina*, or FORA),[10] despite ebbs and flows in their organisational continuity, ability to withstand repression, and influence on the broader labour movement.

Several factors contributed to this steadfastness, always consequential yet never unchallenged, of anarchism among dockworkers during the first three decades of the century: their casual and informal labour practices, immersion in seasonal rural-to-urban migration and in immigrant neighbourhoods, "federative networking"[11] among local coalitions of autonomous craft-base unions along the littoral, political economic ties to larger industrial unions of mariners and seamen, and employers' inability to enforce industrial discipline, as well as their unwillingness, prior to the rise of the modern Peronist State in the 1940s, to embrace protective legislation. Insofar as the FORA perceived itself as a regional and supra-national coordinating body with continental projections and a federalist agenda of grass-roots empowerment,[12] the anarchist dock-

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[7] *La Protesta*, 17 May 1929, and 12 June 1929.

[8] Cf. María Laura Moreno Sainz, *Anarchisme argentin, 1890–1930. Contribution à une mythanalyse*, Lille: Atelier national de reproduction des theses, 2004.

[9] Jacy Alves de Seixas, *Mémoire et oubli. Anarchisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire au Brésil*, Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1992, 159.

[10] Cf. Edgardo Bilsky, *La FORA y el movimiento obrero (1900–1910)*, Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1985; Diego Abad de Santillán, *La F.O.R.A., ideología y trayectoria*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Proyección, 1971; José Elías Niklison, "La Federación Obrera Regional Argentina", *Boletín del Departamento Nacional del Trabajo*, April 1919.

[11] The term is borrowed from Martha A. Ackelsberg, *Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women*, Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1991; 33–34.

[12] Diego Abad de Santillán, 26–32.

workers' resistance societies were its only component with the means to influence anarchist trade unionism in Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and beyond.

The "liberation of economics from capitalism" and "liberation of society from the State"[13] envisioned by the ideal of federalism—the voluntary elaboration of local covenants across national, ethnic and class boundaries—found resonance in the hinterland of Buenos Aires, a vast urban concentration of power and capital that epitomized the failure of post-colonial nation-building to realize regional and democratic development.[14] It served as a rallying cry in the capital city port for overcoming chauvinism and marginality among the ethnically diverse, socially outcast, and politically disenfranchised labouring poor.

The structure of dependent agrarian capitalism in its lopsided urbanindustrial topography concentrated economic activity in Buenos Aires, on the maritime coast, and along the small river ports of the interior Paraná estuary,[15] facilitating the growth of anarchist and syndicalist trade unionism in the shipping industry and is regional nodes of communication. Revolutionary ideas and news of their international implications "travelled well" in Argentina; in addition to the longshoremen and their allies within the FORA, the syndicalist Maritime Workers' Federation (*Federación obrera maritima*, FOM), which began as an anarchist resistance society, federated a far-flung and culturally diverse array of urban and rural labour movements.

Thus small-scale, craft-based organisations coalesced in cargo handling and shipyard operations coexisted and competed with larger industrial-scale unions in the riverine and maritime shipping industries, with major seasonal strike movements soliciting their solidarity and cooperation, and contrasting labour processes dividing them ideologically. Both retained federalist, deliberative structures, tended to oppose decasualization and State tutelage, and promoted an oppositional culture of revolt and anti-capitalist resistance. Whereas both were stigmatized by their enemies as "foreign" in their constituencies and ideological inspiration, the maritime workers elicited overtures from national shipping concerns and government agencies.

Anarchist longshoremen, in contrast, shunned State mediation and, because their contracting agencies provided labour for trans-Atlantic lines, generally vied for control over labour markets that remained out of the maritime workers' reach. Nationalism and internationalism were at the heart of the controversies generated by these workers. Social Catholic unionism competed with anarchism among casual longshoremen, and Radical Civic Union electoral committees appealed to skilled sectors of maritime workers; in both cases, however, suspicion of politics prevailed

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[13] Rudolf Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, transl. Ray E. Chase, Los Angeles: Rocker Publications Committee, 1937, 535.

[14] Cf. Juan Lazarte, *Federalismo y descentralización en la cultura argentina*, Buenos Aires: Cátedra Lisandro de la Torre, 1957. Federalism is described by Lazarte as preceding the history of the Argentine republic, rooted in local popular movements against the Spanish monarchy across colonial regions (130–140). It was also defended by popular rebellions usurped by federalist *caudillos* in the 19th century, and would be realized by popular struggles against the centralized state which undermined economic federalism by fostering capitalism.

[15] Cf. Martine Guibert & Sebastien Velut, "Retour au rivage: Le littoral argentin dans les années 1990", in Alain Musset (ed.), *Les Littoraux latino-américains. Terres à découvrir*, Paris: Éditions de l'Institut des Hautes Etudes d'Amérique Latine, 1998; Clifton B. Kroeber, *The Growth of the Shipping Industry in the Rio de la Plata Region, 1794–1860*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957; Silvia B. Lazzaro, *Estado, capital extranjero y sistema portuario argentino, 1880–1914* (2 vols.), Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1992; Norberto Aurelio López, "Antecedentes y organisación de las sociedades de resistencia. Los trabajadores portuarios y marítimos", in Junta de Estudios Históricos del Puerto Nuestra Señora Santa María del Buen Ayre, *Primer congreso iberoamericano de historia de los puertos*, vol. 1, Buenos Aires: 1991; Ricardo Ortiz, *Valor económico de los puertos argentinos*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1943.

and work-based conflicts generated alliances across ideological lines.[16] Inevitably, the "national" question, which permeated labour controversies in the first half of the century, inserted itself into the controversies of these outwardly internationalist movements and influenced their response to the emergent Argentine State.

Anarchism's port of entry in the Americas

Argentina was historically the main "port of entry" of anarchist ideas and activists in late 19th century South America. Italian immigrants and French refugees of the Paris Commune created early nuclei of agitation in the capital as well as the interior, and a section of the International Workingmen's Association appeared in Buenos Aires in 1870s. In the 1880s Italian émigré Ettore Mattei promoted the anarcho-communist ideas of Errico Malatesta and Piotr Kropotkin in the pages of *El Socialista*, Feliciano Rey and other Spaniards organised collectives inspired by Bakuninism, and Malatesta himself launched a bakers' union during a four-year stint of intense propaganda and organisation among workers in the capital. Fortunato Serantoni's *La Questione Sociale* ("The Social Question"), *El Oprimido* ("The Oppressed") published by the Irish activist John Craeghe, and *La Protesta Humana* ("The Human Protest") founded by the Catalan cabinet-maker Gregorio Inglán Lafarga, spread pro-trade unionist platforms on the heals of major strike waves in the mid-1890s, while in the upriver port of Rosario Virginia Bolten promoted women's liberation through one of the world's earliest anarchist feminist publications, *La Voz de la Mujer* ("The Voice of the Woman"). Finally, the Italian criminologist Pietro Gori founded a "Libertarian Federation of Socialist and Anarchist Groups" and published journals that attracted Argentine intellectuals, poets, and essayists to anarchist ideas.

By 1905 a federalist, anti-authoritarian anarcho-communist tradition, unique in its organisational contours,[17] was firmly rooted among craft-based resistance societies from Buenos Aires to the northern reaches of the Paraná River, weaving a web of trans-regional and cross-national communication and allegiances that their competitors of the syndicalist persuasion would seek to emulate and absorb. This federative networking was not only critical to the recurrent effectiveness of direct action tactics in ports throughout the country; it also contributed to the creative appropriation, by "creole" workers and the Argentine-born descendants of immigrants, of libertarian socialist ideas and cultural repertoires that originated in the trans-Atlantic migrations of the late 19th century.

Anarchist-inspired labour organisation among dockworkers and mariners proved powerful and resilient over several decades, in part because of the effectiveness of direct action in the ports, but also its immersion in local civic and counter-hegemonic movements and cultivation of

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[16] Argentine social Catholicism and political radicalism both grew out of late 19th century efforts to create spaces of political and social citizenship for Argentine-born working and middle-class men, prior to the promulgation of universal male suffrage in 1914. Both were central actors in the formulation an early nationalist discourse in the 1910s and 1920s, and both battled relentlessly for the loyalty of longshoremen and mariners in the face of anarchist and revolutionary syndicalist labour militancy. Cf. Nestor Auza, *Aciertos y fracasos del catolicismo argentino* (3 vols.), Buenos Aires: Docencia Don Bosco-Guadalupe, 1987; Héctor Recalde, *La Iglesia y la cuestión social (1874–1910)*, Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1985; Rock, *Politics in Argentina*; Juan Guillermo Torres, *Labour Politics of Radicalism in Argentina, 1916– 1930*, Ph.D. diss., University of California at San Diego, 1982.

[17] Iaácov Oved, *El anarquismo y el movimineto obrero en Argentina*, Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1978, 423. The libertarian ethics and "propaganda by the deed" of the European anarcho-communist tradition represented by Malatesta and Piotr Kropotkin was combined in Argentina with the anarcho-syndicalist precepts advocated by Antonio Pellicer

trans-regional ties. Its proponents generated an alternative discourse of modernity that served as an antidote to popular disempowerment, and an inclusive language of class as a counterpoint to the fragmentation of ethnicity and atavistic nativism. In the spirit of Spanish anarchist Antonio Pellicer Paraire's essays on organisation, published in *La Protesta Humana* at the turn of the century, the resistance society was viewed as a "receptacle of the innate anti-capitalist consciousness of exploited workers", an "embryo of collective institutions" and "basis for the future anarchist society".[18]

However idealistic and fanciful these claims may appear, they were offered as explanation for very real strikes and solidarity movements organised by highly mobile agitators and propagandists in areas as remote as the Argentine Chaco, where the FORA circulated, in the early 1920s, a newspaper in Guaraní called *Aña Membuy*.[19] And while workers in the capital were of overwhelmingly European origin, the palimpsest of nationalities and cultures they represented interacted with creole idioms and traditions, and with native seasonal casuals, in performances of protest and routines of work. With mixed but tangible results, the integrative and cosmopolitan praxis of anarcho-syndicalist movements, for whom all workers were equal, and the State, the great divider, took root in the nation's ports to an extent never equalled in any other sector of the economy.

Militant organisations of longshoremen and merchant seamen in Buenos Aires were steadfast vehicles, albeit in discontinuous and changing ways, for the resonance of these ideas in the labour movement. They interacted, sometimes oppositionally, sometimes cooperatively, with forces from virtually every other ideology of labour on the Argentine political and discursive spectrum. Their strength and legitimacy were rooted locally in the spatial segmentation of the port and in the tight-knit cosmopolitan quayside community of La Boca del Riachuelo, a colonial-era township located on the southern edges of the capital city. Recurrent rebirths of these unions in the wake of fierce repression and organisational fragmentation were facilitated by the seasonal flow of people and goods throughout the rivers of the Argentine interior—movements which these workers were uniquely empowered to enable or disrupt in their recurring showdowns with export firms, contractors and government agencies throughout the first half of the 20th century.

Their "repertoires of performances", to paraphrase historian Charles Tilly,[20] ranged from ordinary incidences of popular sociability such as picnics, tavern talk and cultural events to informal work practices, harangues, assemblies and strikes, ritualized demonstrations, marches and commemorations, and violent, sometimes riotous confrontations with rivals and enemies. It was an ongoing theatralization of resistance that sedimented memories and meanings of labour conflict through generations in La Boca, where local history was continuously spotlighted on the national stage.

The microcosm of the city's south end had been the industrious nerve of Buenos Aires in the age of sail before becoming a focal point of labour unrest and oppositional politics throughout

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Paraire, promoting federated resistance societies among workers and an open alliance with other autonomous social and cultural organisations.

[18] Antonio Pellicer Paraire, "Organisación obrera", *La Protesta Humana*, 17 November 1900–1 June 1901.

[19] Diego Abad de Santillán, *Memorias, 1897–1936*, Barcelona: Planeta, 1977, 63.

[20] Charles Tilly, "Contention and the Urban Poor in Eighteenth and NineteenthCentury Latin America" in Silvia M. Arrom and Servando Ortoli (eds.), *Riots in the Cities: Popular Politics and the Urban Poor in Latin America, 1765–1910*, Washington, D.C.: Scholarly Resources, 1996, 230.

the first half of the 20th century. The stage for the organisation of both capital and labour in the port was set in 1900, when the young longshoremen's resistance societies in La Boca, formed by anarchists in the mid-1890s, began the practice of staging quasi-annual strike movements during the high export season.

A unified longshoremens' union led by the Spanish anarchist Francisco Rós, the Resistance Society of the Portworkers of the Capital (*Sociedad de resistencia obreros del puerto de la capital*, or SROPC), was created in 1901, swiftly extending its power beyond the local quays, overseeing the organisation of related trades, and forming a Federation of Longshoremen and Related Trades (*Federación de estibadores y afines*) to coordinate with the provinces. It rapidly burgeoned into one of the most powerful resistance societies in the country, feared by the Argentine Chamber of Commerce and by foreign consignees throughout the country's ports.[21]

The government responded decisively to the growing momentum of anarchist activism: a Residency Law was passed in 1902 to authorize the deportation of foreign agitators (among them Francisco Rós). The labour press and union halls were closed down, resistance societies went underground, the cavalry and infantry occupied the Riachuelo district and all public forms of agitation were effectively suppressed.

Anarchists and Catholics: cosmopolitanism vs. nativism

By the following year, however, Rós' comrade, naturalized Argentine Constante Carballo, had reconstituted the SROPC. The resistance society could still claim control over 5,000 dockworkers in Buenos Aires and wield influence in at least ten other ports of the Argentine littoral, convening a national congress of the Federation of Port Workers (*Federación de obreros portuarios*) in July with the participation of delegates from Uruguay. The role of the SROPC in fomenting oppositional working-class activities among the quayside community, including theatre presentations and open-air poetry readings, had survived the brutal repression of organised labour and anarchist agitation the year before.[22] It was also in the headquarters of the SROPC that Italian-born sailor Sinforiano Corvetto established, in June 1903, the anarchist Resistance Society of Mariners and Firemen (*Sociedad de resistencia de marineros y foguistas*, or SRMF) on the ruins of a mutualist, Christian Democratic-leaning sailors' and firemen's union that was persuaded by the effectiveness of direct action to shed its clerical an political ties in favour of an anarchist platform.

The official endorsement of a nativist discourse by the authorities in the Residency Law, the mostly foreign-born membership of waterfront unions at the time, and the abundance of native seasonal migrants and unemployed casuals provided fertile terrain for competing loyalties to develop in the port, and for the national question to emerge as the key ideological battleground among unions. In the summer of 1903 social Catholics launched a campaign to establish a hiring preference for native Argentine port workers. The Argentine Society of Longshoremen (*Sociedad argentina de estibadores del puerto de Buenos Aires*, or SAEP), led by Liborio Vaudagnotto, was launched with active support from the conservative Workers' Circles and a network of Radical

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[21] After the departure of ten unions from the second congress of the *Federacion obrera gremial argentina* in 1902, the SROPC alone provided 3,200 affiliates, or 42 percent, of the 7,630 workers still represented by 31 unions; Diego Abad de Santillan, *El movimiento anarquista en la Argentina (desde sus comienzos hasta 1910)*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Argonauta, 1930, 80–84.

[22] *El Reporter del Puerto*, 1 September 1903; *La Protesta Humana*, 5 September 1903.

Civic Union political clubs, all of them interested in developing protective legislation and pre-empting socialist and anarchist influence in the larger labour movement.[23]

Whereas the Catholic union sought to promote temperance, job security and political loyalty among uprooted *creole* and naturalized workers, the anarchist resistance society fostered inter-ethnic solidarity and anti-clerical activism amongst overwhelmingly disenfranchised men and women of the crowded dockland tenements in La Boca. For all the precariousness and instability of family and residency patterns in the quayside community, the presence of a powerful op-positional subculture among dockworkers provided substantial protection from chronic labour market insecurity and male licentiousness.

In a social environment prone to widespread alcoholism, violence, petty crime and cheap sex, both Catholics and anarchists sought to "dignify" the longshoremen's condition through ethical and moralistic discourses of responsibility. The SROPC glorified the masculine qualities and vir-tuous toil of manual quayside work, discouraged its sympathizers from engaging in prostitution and gambling, and derided what it perceived as a hostile campaign to manipulate the ignorance of illiterate *creole* day labourers toward political ends.[24] At the same time, anarchists, derided by their socialist adversaries as "desperate proletarians and dilettante bourgeois"[25] embraced the popular culture of the tenements, projecting themselves as adversaries of discipline and domes-ticity; in the caustic tradition of late 19th century libertarians, as "the vagrants, the malefactors, the rabble, the scum of society, the sublime corrosive of the present social order".[26]

The organisation of cultural activities by the anarchist resistance societies, added to their ad-vocacy of rationalist education and other labour-initiated social campaigns, served both as plat-forms for ideological proselytizing and bridges between migrant dockside workers, who were the targets of social Catholic reform. The SROPC was a vehicle for an oppositional working-class culture of revolt and transgression of authority, which it attempted to channel into a discourse of solidarity, direct action and workplace insubordination. Insofar as this culture enabled unsettled workers to evade the stigmas of nationality and ethnicity within which existing institutions—governmental, religious, capitalist or mutualist—framed their rhetorics of inclusion and exclu-sion, it legitimated the emancipatory representation of individual freedom and collective force offered by anarchist propagandists linked to the FORA.

Government authorities, the church and elite observers of the social question in the port were prompt to evaluate a worker's sobriety, honesty and accountability according to the criteria of his affinities with the Catholic union; membership in the vilified resistance society drew instant suspicions of immorality. Church groups also lamented male socializing in the canteens and tav-erns, female loitering in the patios of the tenements, and the frequent transitory relationships between them. Conversely, in the casual working community of dockside labourers, bohemian freethinkers and anarchist intellectuals could find substance for their idealized predicament of free love. The conservatizing impact, real or imagined, of settled family ties on working men is reflected in the Catholic union's rhetoric of responsible breadwinning, domesticity and pro-tection of mothers, whereas anarchist writings directed at port workers depicted marriage as a

[23] *La Vanguardia*, 14 November 1903; *El Reporter del Puerto*, 23 November 1903; *El Progreso de La Boca*, 13 Decem-ber 1903.

[24] *La Protesta*, 14 November 1903.

[25] Enrique Dickman in *La Vanguardia*, 26 April 1902.

[26] *El Perseguido*, 18 May 1890, cited in José Moya, "The Positive Side of Stereotypes: Jewish Anarchists in Early Twentieth-Century Buenos Aires", *Jewish History* 18, 2004, 19–48.

form of subservience for both man and woman. These tensions would resurface over the course of the next three decades, as the successors of both movements on the docks continued to confront each other—in new contexts, but on the same street corners—over the direction and goals of working-class action.

In workplace conflicts, anarchists and Catholics were not perpetual antagonists, their fiery rhetoric and ideological differences notwithstanding. The authority commanded by the SROPC among certain foremen, small contractors and skippers in the Vuelta de Rocha area rested in large part on the familiarity incurred by clientelistic hiring networks, shared living spaces and the common patronizing of taverns. Large numbers of uprooted casual workers, as well as Paraguayan and provincial Argentine deckhands employed by the coastal Mihánovich fleet, typically flooded the pensions, canteens and hiring halls of La Boca during the high season, and many of them relied on the informal ties of resistance societies with the dockside hiring authorities (ship captains, lighter skippers, stevedore and shed foremen, cart owners, etc.) to obtain work.[27]

Throughout the first decades of the century, the degree to which competing organisations succeeded in wresting influence from the anarchists depended not only on support from employers and police authorities, but also on their ability to spatially circumscribe these informal networks to the Riachuelo area, where anarchist loyalties were deeply entrenched. Ethnic antagonisms between native and foreign workers were always fueled by the unions' enemies. Insofar as they existed, however, they were not the only source of violence that rocked the port community the summer of 1903–1904; nor would they prevent close cooperation, based on class-based affinities, workrelated issues, and a shared revulsion for State-sponsored military crackdowns, between the anarchist and Catholic societies in the movement's aftermath.

In 1903 the high export season witnessed a recrudescence of labour activism in La Boca, where the newly organised tramway workers' union paralyzed transportation throughout the southern fringes of the city and quickly subsumed other trades. Corvetto launched the young mariners' resistance society in a strike movement that escalated the conflict on the docks and sparked further violence and repression. With over 12,000 workers on strike in the port district, the State attempted to intervene in the turf wars between unions, and prevent a general strike, by imposing a measure of job preference (60 percent) for members of the Catholic SAEP, effectively locking out the SROPC from the newly inaugurated facilities of the modern Puerto Madero waterfront.[28]

Anarchists concentrated their efforts on reorganising the defunct *Federación de estibadores* with the support of the larger labour movement. In the winter of 1904, during the congress that replaced the socialist and anarchist Argentine Workers' Federation (*Federación obrera argentina*, the FOA) with the FORA, a nation-wide solidarity pact organised existing resistance societies into local and provincial federations that sought to establish connections with workers in Uruguay and Brazil.[29] In 1905, with the port of Buenos Aires under constant police vigilance and military guard, a consortium of importexport firms, shipping and railway companies responded with the United Society for the Protection of Free Labour (*Sociedad unión protectora del trabajo libre*, or "*Protectora*"), a classic "yellow" union presided over by the British-sponsored president of the ocean liner shipping lobby, Pedro Christopherson.

[27] *Prefectura General de Puertos, Sociedades gremiales en el puerto*, Buenos Aires: 1904.

[28] *La Organisación Obrera*, 15/25/1904.

[29] Diego Abad de Santillan, 148–154; *El Diario*, 11 November 1904 and 22–23 November 1904; *La Organisación Obrera*, 25 November 1904; *La Prensa*, 15 November 1904; Hobart Spalding, *La Clase trabajadora argentina. Documentos para su historia, 1890/1912*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1970, 440–442. 30 *La Vanguardia*, 5 August 1905 and 7

Despite being left with a range of action largely circumscribed to the old Riachuelo quays, the anarchist resistance society still claimed the allegiance of 75 percent of all dockworkers in the port.30 The radicalization of the FORA and of the SROPC under the leadership of a charismatic *creole* organiser, Estebán Almada's, was exemplified by the adoption, during the federation's Fifth Congress, of the collectivist precepts of "anarcho-communism", and durably splintered the organised labour movement nationally. At the local level, a core of anarchist longshoremen continued to harangue crowds in marketplaces and on street corners, to place work teams with foremen from taverns and tenements, to canvass the quayside with revolutionary propaganda and to boycott employers who failed to abide by the informal rules established in past strike settlements.

The mariners' resistance society also preserved the power to obtain pledges from stevedore foremen and ship captains that *Protectora* affiliates would be banned from shape-ups in the Riachuelo area.[30] There was unanimity, in the ranks of the FORA, on the question of the need for craft unity to be supplemented by working-class solidarity. The outbreak of another dockworkers' strike in the upriver port of Rosario in the winter of 1905 gave the resistance societies the opportunity to activate nation-wide solidarity pacts and mobilize port workers in general against the intromissions of the *Protectora.*

In the course of the ensuing conflict, even a renegade Christian Democratic leader such as Ángel Capurro could share a tribune with anarchist orator Serafín Romero (who was soon to succeed Almada as leader of the SROPC), to denounce the *Protectora* for "violating individual freedom". He then looked on as Romero, following a ritual incantation of libertarian ideals, presided over the formation of commissions, composed of both anarchist and Catholic workers, to patrol the port for propaganda and the intimidation of strike-breakers.[31] Thus attempts by nationalists to divide workers along ethnic lines proved ineffective in the face of the cosmopolitan anarchists' leadership's success at incorporating native-born workers into the internationalist and anti-Statist ranks of the FORA.

When President Manuel Quintana declared a three-month state of siege, the port strike in Buenos Aires continued for weeks. Police investigators complained of numerous informal assemblies of the Catholic union throughout La Boca and San Telmo, in which notorious anarchist leaders emerged from hiding and were allowed to speak. Almada, whose popularity in La Boca and among the 8,000-odd striking dockworkers had soared during the conflict, was able to strike an informal deal with a majority of foremen that they refrain from hiring *Protectora* affiliates, transforming, much to the astonishment of the authorities, a forced resumption of work on October 18 into a quiet victory for the SROPC. The resistance society continued its obstruction of business-as-usual by supporting an ongoing coal heavers' strike against British interests in the port, which brought refuelling operations to a virtual standstill.

Finally, the workers of the nearby Isla Maciel shipyards boycotted Mihánovich throughout the state of siege, and numerous anarchist deportees were reported to be re-entering the country through Montevideo and Salto Oriental (Uruguay) with help from the shipyard braziers' resistance society. As the date of expiration approached and the unions prepared for a lifting of the state of siege, police informants, stevedore contractors, ship captains and patrons of the *Protec-*

September 1905.

[30] Prefectura General de Puertos, División de Investigaciones, Copiador interno n. 6 (1905/1906), 60–67, 12/01/1905; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n.21 (1905/1906), 59, 09/25/1905.

[31] *La Vanguardia*, 3 October 1905 and 4 October 1905; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 21, 1905/1906, 197–199, 10/04/1905.

tora expected nothing less than a full-scale renewal of anarchist disruption in the port.[32] Once again, neither the ship owners' and contractors' offensive against resistance societies, nor police repression, had succeeded in undermining the effectiveness of direct action tactics or dismembering anarchist unionism in the port, despite the organisational weakness of the broader FORA and the lack of formal channels for collective bargaining between capital and labour.

Anarchists staged numerous social and political events in La Boca during the following months, and frequent police reports deplored the popularity of educational events held in the headquarters of resistance societies, as well as the presence of SROPC orators in the marketplaces and tenements of the quayside district. Almada took advantage of the calm winter months to organise an anarchist library in the union's headquarters. His popular nightly conferences were attended, according to police informants, by bohemian freethinkers and workers from a variety of different trades and backgrounds.

Despite the downswing in seasonal in-migration, SROPC orators described as "dark-skinned" and with provincial accents routinely addressed crowds of *gringos* (a generic term for foreigners), *tanos* (Italians) and *gallegos* (Spaniards) in canteens run by immigrant concessionaires in La Boca. In June, the sawmill workers' union organised a fundraiser for the anarchist newspaper *La Protesta* in the José Verdi theatre of La Boca, during which 700 men, women and children watched the *Caballeros del Ideal* enact revolutionary dramas portraying heroic striking longshoremen. SROPC activist Francisco López openly announced a climatic general strike for the forthcoming high season; the evening ended, typically, with chants of "Long live anarchy" and "Long live the social revolution".[33]

Local Catholic politicians, who lost the ship owners' favour in the aftermath of an attempted 1905 Radical Civic Union coup, ceased to oppose confrontational tactics in the pursuit of social reform for the labouring poor. The appearance of the pro-business *Protectora* lessened their reliance on nativist appeals and law-and-order slogans. Indeed, the threat to informal mechanisms of clientelism, labour market control and workplace protection was equally felt by the rival Catholic and anarchist unions, which shared—despite their ideological opposition, history of violence and mutual distrust—an interest in defending workers. During the 1905 strike, which mobilized an estimated 18,000 workers along the Argentine littoral, the "directory committee" charged with coordinating the movement was made up of fifteen workers from each society, and presided over by Almada and Vaudagnotto, the respective leaders of the anti-clerical SROPC and Catholic SAEP. Although the two unions eventually became divided over the issue of accepting arbitration under the state of siege, their language never recovered the degree of quasi-racial slurs and mutual condemnation that had characterized the intense rivalry of the 1903–1904 period.[34]

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[32] Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 21, 1905/1906, 263–264, 267, 377–379, 392–393 & 436; 10/18/1905, 10/20/1905,12/04/1905, 12/15/1905 & 01/03/1906; Copiador de investigaciones n. 24, 1906, 503–504, 09/28/1906; *Boletín del Comité Ejecutivo del Partido Socialista*, 18 November 1905; *La Vanguardia*, 26 January 1906; *La Protesta*, 1 February 1906.

[33] Policía Federal, Division Orden Social, Copiador de Investigaciones n. 23, 1906, 227–229, 302–303, 424–425 & 466–470, 06/10/1906, 06/13/1906, 06/22/1906 & 06/25/1906.

[34] Ibid., 224–225.

The emergence of syndicalism

In the winter of 1906, it was the turn of the mariners to alter the course of organised labour on the waterfront, and to usher in new revolutionary syndicalist strategies that were somewhat at odds with the anarcho-communist precepts of the FORA, but still deeply influenced by them. The sailors' and firemen's resistance society launched a strike for improved hygiene and safety on coastal ships, so destabilizing in both Buenos Aires and the interior that that the Prefecture referred to it as an "insurrection".

The involvement of a State agency, the National Labour Department (*Departamento nacional del trabajo*, DNT), in implementing the subsequent accords responded to the need for institutionalized bargaining channels capable of offsetting future disruptions of the highseason export trade. As such, it represented a major breakthrough for the mariners' unions, notwithstanding their direct action rhetoric and ongoing affiliation with the anarchist federation. Their strength and prerogatives were informally recognized by the ruling establishment, their legitimacy among workers reinforced by practical results, and their potentially controllable labour market in constant expansion.

These victories resulted in the formal creation of a federalist trade union with more revolutionary syndicalist than pure anarchist contours.[35] The new Argentine Maritime Workers' League (*Liga obrera naval argentina*, or LONA), an alliance between sailors, firemen and stewards, was to organise and unify all sections of seafaring labour (excluding ship captains and officers, still regarded as management) in Buenos Aires, Rosario and other ports of the Argentine littoral from Santa Fé to Posadas. Based in familiar union halls of La Boca, on Olavarría 363 and Suárez 44, the LONA remained committed to pre-existing organisational bonds between mariners, longshoremen, cartmen and other port workers' unions of the Riachuelo district, but its drive for the federation of maritime craft unions nationwide brought it into frequent conflict with anarchist labour organisers.

At the first pro-unification congress held in 1907 by the rival anarchist FORA and syndicalist General Union of Labour (*Unión general de trabajadores*, or UGT), representatives of the LONA argued that local federations should be replaced by nation-wide federations, allowing for various unions of one locality to establish solidarity pledges between one another, but unifying—in opposition to the anarchocommunist advocacy of loose cross-craft alliances—all workers within a single industry. The mariners also proposed that the labour movement circumscribe ideological quarrels to areas outside the union halls, and suggested that propaganda be centred exclusively on economic demands.[36]

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[35] In 1905, syndicalist proponents of a unified federalist labour movement unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile the anarchist FORA and the socialist-leaning UGT, which had adopted revolutionary syndicalist precepts in August of the same year. In 1906 the socialist party expelled its syndicalist faction, leading to the creation of an Syndicalist Socialist Group (*Agrupación socialista sindicalista*) and the increasing influence of syndicalist propagandists on the fringes of the labour movement, both within and beyond the sphere of anarchist influence. Efforts to transcend the existing loose federation of local inter-craft anarchist alliances and consolidate a parallel national federation of mariners' unions began after a failed 1905 machinists' strike, and culminated in the creation of the syndicalist Maritime Workers' Federation (*Federación obrera maritime*, FOM) in 1910. See, in particular, Edgardo Bilsky, "Campo politico y representaciones sociales: Estudio sobre el sindicalismo revolucionario en Argentina", mimeo, n.d., and "La diffusion de la pensée de Sorel et le syndicalisme revolutionnaire en Argentine", *Estudos*, No. 5, November 1986; and various issues of *La Acción socialista* and *La Aurora del marino*, 1905–1906.

[36] *Por la unidad del proletariado, viva la Liga obrera naval!* Flyer dated April 1907; *CGT*, 6 July 1934. The increasingly militant reporting on seamen's unionism in the socialist newspaper *La Vanguardia*, and revolutionary syndical-

The anarchist dockworkers begged to differ. Their next move was, in 1907, to trigger a nationwide strike "for the dignifying of work" in which waterfront workers throughout the Paraná River system and the Atlantic coast played a prominent role, an expression of sheer solidarity across trades that was entirely devoid of economic demands.[37] In its wake, however, mariners, reluctant to risk their prior gains obtained through DNT arbitration, retreated from a boycott declared against a major foreign-owned cereal export concern. Interestingly, the neocorporatist rhetoric employed by LONA representatives tended to portray landed casuals employed in cargo handling as individualists and outcasts, whereas seafarers were likened to the more conventional working-class ideal of proud and self-sacrificing heads of family.[38] The implicit message was that mariners' unions were unprepared to renounce, for the sake of pure solidarity, certain organisational and economic achievements rendered lucrative by the seasonal expansion of the export trade.

When anarchist orators denounced such tactical considerations in their respective speeches before a LONA assembly, they invoked the submission of mariners to hierarchical authority on board the ships as a source of opportunism and "absence of dignity".[39] Anarchocommunists viewed resistance societies as loosely federated tools of propaganda in the larger society, one of many loci of opposition to State control and capitalist exploitation. Revolutionary syndicalists, on the other hand, extolled trade unions as barricaded unifiers of working-class struggle, preferring industrial to craft-based organisational forms. In practice, anarchists remained influential among sailors and firemen within the LONA, and officers, who were "management", would soon find their way into syndicalist organisations.

Notwithstanding the gradual decline of its nationwide resonance after 1907, anarchist labour activism among longshoremen and their counterparts in related shipping and cargo handling trades had proven extraordinarily resilient during the five years which followed the promulgation of the Residency Law in 1902. By the time Romero replaced Almada as secretary of the SROPC, however, the once-powerful resistance society had entered into conflict with many of its own sections and with the leadership of the LONA. Undercover monitoring of the resistance societies had reinforced the vigilance of the police, open-air anarchist proselytizing was tolerated but circumscribed to La Boca, and the numerous boycotts and other partial movements launched in 1906 and 1907 had proven less decisive than in the past.

In the fall of 1907, Romero's insistence on pursuing a general strike movement beyond the period of intense export activity, seasonal migration and high demand durably crippled the mobilizing capacity of resistance societies in the port; it ended in a public admission of disaster. The

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ist organ *La Acción socialista*, reflected a growing confluence of views between the leadership of the SRMF and the syndicalist doctrine propagated by the UGT. At the same time, the anarchist FORA also increased its activism in favor of the mariners' cause. On January 18th, a cartmen's assembly, responding to an appeal by the FORA, voted to send a financial contribution to Genoese seamen on strike in Italy; cf. Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 27, 1906/1907, 323–325, 01/19/1907; *La Protesta*, 01/25/1907, 01/27/1907 and 01/29/1907.

[37] *La Protesta*, 25 January 1907, 27 January 1907, 29 January 1907.

[38] *La Protesta*, 15 February 1907; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 27, 1906/1907, 472–473 & 477–480, 02/09/1907 & 02/12/1907; Copiador de investigaciones n. 29, 1907, 124–125 & 135–137, 05/21/1907 & 05/22/1907; Prefectura General de Puertos, División de Investigaciones, Copiador interno n. 7 (1906/1907), 220, 225–231 & 355–356, 02/11/1907, 02/14/1907 & 05/22/1907.

[39] Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 27, 1906/1907, 475–476, 02/11/1907; "El boycot de la casa Dreyfus", SROPC flyer dated 02.14.1907. The flyer also quotes Serafín Romero as referring to the "suspect morality" of LONA officials.

SROPC undertook a process of reorganisation through which it hoped to overcome the infighting caused by geographic sectionalism. After having claimed ascendancy over some 15,000 workers (of a total of 18,000) at the beginning of the year, the resistance society exposed itself to renewed *Protectora* assaults, faced a preventive police crackdown in the spring and ended 1907 in a state of disarray, its most respected leaders once again forced into hiding. An indication of the level of acrimony which reigned among anarchist longshoremen is that the SROPC was twice dissolved by clandestine assembly votes. Yet it would be mistaken to assume that as a result of this decline, anarchism as an ideology of protest had faded from the scene.

During the tenement dwellers' rent strike in August–December 1907, SROPC activists were present in the Committee of La Boca which functioned in the headquarters of the LONA (Olavarría 363), and the movement's central committee met in Montes de Oca 972, headquarters of the FORA. The inability of embattled quayside resistance societies to fully exert their power at the level of the workplace did not entail their disappearance, as organisers and agitators, from the community scene.

By the end of the decade the nativist SAEP had been absorbed by the *Protectora* and its small union fund appropriated by two dissenters who joined in the reorganisation of the embattled SROPC.[40] This simultaneous weakening of the organised social Catholic and anarchist dockworkers' unions paved the way for widespread workplace impunity on the docks, but the respite for employers was short-lived. Direct action resurfaced as the anarchist resistance society again showed its strength in 1912, before emerging, in 1915, as a stronghold of the "anarchist" union federation (the FORA identifying with the fifth congress of 1905, the FORA-V) opposed to the pragmatic "syndicalist" orientation of the larger FORA-IX (identifying with the ninth congress of 1915, FORA-IX).

The latter drew its first elected president, Francisco García, and many of its shock troops from the successor of the LONA, the FOM, a key component of organised labour's revival in the wake of the European war. As syndicalist themes of industry-wide coordination, trade union apoliticism, workplace autonomy and internationalism were tested by rapid modernization, nascent electoral politics and escalating class conflict on the ships, a new dockworkers' union, the Longshoremen's Section of Dikes and Docks (*Sección estibadores diques y dársenas*, also known as *Diques y dársenas*), evicted the *Protectora* from the Puerto Madero docks and allied itself with the FOM against the anarchist SROPC and its allies in La Boca. Their rivalry endured for over twenty years, and crystallized into a fierce ideological battle over the role of nationalism, which anarcho-syndicalist tradition abhorred, and its treatment in the struggles of organised labour.

As labour legislation was promulgated in the late 1920s under the second administration of Radical Civil Union leader Hipólito Yrigoyen, and especially under the conservative regime of Roberto Ortiz two decades later, the syndicalist maritime workers' and longshoremen's unions would become increasingly entangled with national merchant marine development; whereas anarchist resistance societies on the docks, by their repudiation of nationalism, would come under fire for resisting State intervention, thereby allegedly serving the interests of foreign shipping concerns.

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[40] Policía Federal, División Orden Social, Copiador de investigaciones n. 35, 1908, 229–230, 03/25/1908; *La Protesta*, 6 December 1908.

Labour insurgency confronts nationalism after the European War

Following the war, the SROPC played a key role in the revival of craft-based anarchism as enshrined by the historic FORA, and the syndicalist FOM spearheaded an unprecedented wave of industrial labour agitation nationwide. Both unions claimed La Boca as their birthplace and bastion, and both were effective in reviving past networks of influence and job placement in the community and along the littoral. The latter benefited from a new interest of the State in mediating between capital labour, a policy tested in the 1912 dock strike and enforced when Radical Civic Union leader Hipólito Yrigoyen won the presidency by universal male suffrage in 1916.

At the community level, the renewal of massive work stoppages, one winter high season after another, awakened webs of solidarity woven by the anarchists of old. Canvassing for donations was carried out by a Popular Committee of La Boca; daily assemblies were held in the Verdi Theater; makeshift dining halls were set up by the FOM, staffed by maritime stewards and supplied with foodstuffs donated by vendors from the local Garibaldi and Solís markets; wandering strike commissions informed incoming seamen, and discouraged landed dockworkers from replacing sailors in stevedoring tasks; local resistance societies provided assistance in the form of printing materials or financial contributions; and grievances voiced by the families of striking men were addressed by the unions through a special relief committee.[41]

But police repression was not as forthcoming, and for the first time, ship owners were held by the President's authority to respect the ensuing accords, a shift welcomed by the syndicalist leadership of FOM. The professed neutrality of the first Yrigoyen government, an its treatment of the owners' and the workers' organisations as equal belligerents in the conflict, enhanced the effectiveness and legitimacy of syndicalist practices grounded in a binary vision of class struggle, and exposed the shipping industry, deprived of systematic support from the State, to the broadening of hitherto informal and dispersed expressions of workers' control.

In early 1917, a new version of the old *Protectora*, the Maritime Workers' Society for the Protection of Free Labour (*Sociedad obrera maritima protectora del trabajo libre*) was established by the Mihánovich company in the heart of La Boca to wage an open-shop drive. Its dissolution instantly became a rallying cry for the FOM and its allies, for whom union control over hiring guaranteed safety, skill and fairness on the ships; it was achieved through a resounding boycott of the firm in April during which ship captains, traditionally viewed as management, began to warm to the idea of trade unions as worthy allies in the smooth functioning of the labour process.

Hence the meteoric rise of the revolutionary syndicalist FOM was accompanied by a more tactical approach to strikes, as well as a seemingly paradoxical "institutionalization" of workplace cooperation between mariners and the highest authorities on board. Officers accepted direct action under the auspices of their "subaltern" brethren and tacitly recognized union control on the ships. While many were politically associated with the Radical Civic Union, they guarded their organisational autonomy and interests by embracing "apolitical" syndicalist doctrine, according to which the weakening of capitalist control over the labour process required breaking craft barriers and consolidating federalist ties between salaried professions.[42] The informal and decentralized structure of the labour process in the expanding merchant marine, combined with

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[41] *La Prensa*, 13 December 1916; *La Epoca*, 6 December 1908; 15–16 December 1916, 17 December 1916; *Solidaridad con la huelga maritima*, FORA flyer dated 1 January 1917.

[42] *La Organisación Obrera* 15/13/1918.

the mutual interest of managers and workers in an efficient and consensual chain of command, led workers' and officers' organisations to assert a degree of control in everyday affairs which was unimaginable in a factory setting.

A statement by the syndicalist FORA-IX praised the outcome of the strike as a textbook triumph of solidarity in which differences in hierarchy and category of employment were undermined by a mutual recognition of the pre-eminence of "class struggle".[43] Union membership surged. FOM delegates and inspectors became symbols of its tentacular presence in the most remote areas of the country. Workingclass solidarity became a tangibly realizable endeavour, and mariners proved their commitment to it by affording agricultural, meatpacking and railway workers logistical support for their strikes, and plantation workers in the Upper Paraná protection against unspeakable exploitation; even unions in Uruguay and Paraguay had the full backing of their Argentine allies.

The anarchist FORA-V rode the wave of these movements, exerting an indirect power of nuisance among sailors' and firemen's sections of the FOM and prospering from the weight of the anarchist dockworkers' union in its own ranks. Between 1915 and 1920 its membership expanded from 21 craft-based societies to well over 200.[44] In an era of unprecedented labour movement growth and trade union militancy, the waterfront workers of Buenos Aires continued to assert the locational strength which had made the early organisational achievements of the anarchist heyday possible. Alarmed, representatives of the meat-packing plants and railway companies, shipping firms, exporters and importers, the industrialists' Argentine Industrial Union (*Unión industrial argentina*, or UIA) and the oligarchic Rural Society (*Sociedad rural*) coalesced in 1918 behind the creation of a new organisation, the National Labour Association (*Asociación nacional del trabajo*, ANT).

Its emergence reflected a perception among elites that in order to undermine the spectacular growth of organised labour, workers' interests had to be taken into account, as Joaquín Anchorena later put it, "with loving care". Wage-earners needed "guidance and assistance" in defending their just claims to moral betterment and material progress. "Unemployed workers" would be freed by the Association from the "tyranny of trade unions and federations", and given work as part of a policy of "social prophylaxis" against the disease of protest. The ANT announced its determination to protect "free labour" and organise the defence of "the rights and interests of commerce and industry insofar as they may be affected by illegal and abusive procedures on the part of employees or workmen".[45]

[43] José Elías Niklison "La Federacion obrera maritima", *Boletín del Departamento Nacional del Trabajo*, n. 40, Feb. 1919, 72–74.

[44] José Elías Niklison, "La Federacion obrera regional argentina", *Boletín del Departamento Nacional del Trabajo*, n. 41, April 1920, 37; Edgardo Bilsky, *La semána trágica*, Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1984, 27–28; Policía Federal, Sección Orden Social, Memoria de investigaciones, 1918, Buenos Aires, 1919.

[45] *La Concordia*, 3 August 1919, 2 October 1919, 17 July 1920, 21 February 1922.

Fig. 9. Maritime workers and dockers affiliated to the Regional Workers Federation of Argentina (FORA) meet in January 1919 on the eve of a general strike.

Another weapon of nativist and nationalist sectors, the Argentine Patriotic League (*Liga patriotica argentina*) emerged the following year the wake of the January 1919 "tragic week" during which many of the city's neighbourhoods and environs were engulfed in fierce repression against striking metallurgical workers. Hundreds of workers in the port were killed and over a thousand wounded in a major show of force by the police, military and paramilitary groups, during which FOM headquarters in La Boca, revolutionary banners dawning from the windows, became a focal point of civil disobedience; sailors and longshoremen crowded the front of the building and nearby street corners, often, in defiance of the police, exchanging information about the uprising in Guaraní or in Italian dialects rather than in Spanish.[46]

In the context of fierce nativist rhetoric and anti-union drives, which both served the interest of foreign ship owners' lobbies and consignees, anarchists and syndicalists denounced imperialism in unison by championing the cosmopolitan and immigrant heritage of their respective movements. Working-class resistance was framed in a rhetoric of universal rights and anti-capitalist struggle, whereas State and employer-supported open shop drives stigmatized ethnic markers of cultural diversity as "foreign" impediments to social peace, disruptive of international commerce, anathema to the national interest, and—amidst rising sirens of post-war nationalism—at odds with the "Argentine" temperament.

The Patriotic League became the chief nemesis of mariners' and port workers' unions during the 1920s. It aimed, in the words of its president, Manuel Carlés, to fight "anarchism, revolutionary syndicalism, maximalist socialism" and their supporters, an "immoral lot of human riff-raff without God, fatherland nor law".[47] When its militia joined the shipping establishment in a full-scale attack on the FOM, however, resistance in La Boca flared up once again. In strike time, the FOM and SROPC threw their weight behind campaigns to provide idle seamen with emergency housing. The maritime cooks' and stewards' union staffed an emergency makeshift restaurant in which food supplies were rationed out to idle seamen and their families.

The syndicalist labour press elevated such solidarity to the rank of "experiment in working-class empowerment", describing the selfmanaged cafeteria as lesson in the "rights and duties of the struggle for freed and unsubjugated labour". The barbers' union in La Boca offered free haircuts. Anarchist resistance societies and syndicalist trade unions offered their strike funds. Others, such as the flour mill workers, voted to contribute a full day's pay to the seamen's cause.

A Pro-Seafarers Committee (*Comité pro-gente del mar*) canvassed throughout working-class neighbourhood to raise strike funds. Local grocers donated comestibles. Assemblies, too numerous to be held in the Verdi Theater, were held in the popular *Boca juniors* soccer stadium, lent for free by the club's board of executives. Seldom in the history of organised labour had channels of community outreach, rehearsed by anarcho-syndicalist resistance societies in the early years of the century, been so successfully put to task. The mobilization of *boquense* society in favour of solidarity with idle port workers, and the public manifestation of support for workers locked out

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[46] Policía de la Capital, División de Investigaciones, sec.22, Copiador de notas n.195, 1918–1919, 475–478; *La Organisación Obrera*, 20 January 1919.

[47] Cf. Manuel Carlés, *Definición de la Liga Patriótica Argentina (Guia del buen sentido social)*, Buenos Aires: n.ed., 1920.

by their industry, seemed to support revolutionary syndicalist claims that a social awakening could only result from the "emancipatory breakthroughs of sustained class struggle".[48]

The outwardly nationalist Radical Civic Union government's response was to decree the "*oficialización*" or decasualization of work in the port, empowering the customs authority to recruit, register and remunerate workers on the ships and on the docks. The FOM agreed to resume work on its own terms, preserving its discretionary control over the labour process. Despite the apparent loss of autonomy and ideological concession to State meddling, however, in practice the authority solicited workers from the union through the ship captain and guaranteed the enforcement of rules and commitments by employers, while reducing the owners' effective control over work operations. The ship captains collaborated with the FOM as they had before, and wages were channelled through a central bank account managed by the customs authority.

This *modus vivendi* allowed seamen to preserve an informal margin of control as long as the administration of Hipólito Yrigoyen recognized its grievances against the arbitrary labour practices of private hiring agencies in general, and the foreign-controlled ANT in particular. When the project was initially discussed, the anarchist newspaper was right in stating that "without the collaboration of the FOM, *oficialización* is meaningless". From a position of strength, then, the union accepted it as a first step toward the confection of a genuine labour statute for mariners and seamen, while proclaiming its right to enforce its union monopoly by all means necessary, including strikes and boycotts.[49] Once again, a conflict pitting the mariners' union against the powerful economic establishment of export interests ended in a resounding victory for the workers.

Coming on the heels of the "tragic week", the good fortune of the syndicalist FOM stood in sharp contrast with the renewed mass arrests and deportations which befell upon other sectors of organised labour. The longshoremen's resistance society, which had consolidated its influence in La Boca and spearheaded the revival of the anarchist FORA in 1919, opposed the decasualization on the grounds that it represented direct State intervention in the port and required dockworkers to submit to a formal registration procedure to be eligible for work. The combination of repression against its leadership, division between sections and the comparative institutional weakness of the resistance society with respect to the FOM, made dockworkers more vulnerable to the recruitment of non-unionized workers by contractors via the customs authority.

The rivals of the anarchists in Puerto Madero, *Diques y dársenas*, and two autonomous unions including the coal heavers, established a formal solidarity pact with the mariners to shield themselves from ANT competition and benefit from the FOM's authority in the hiring process, all in the name of "revolutionary trade-union struggle".[50] The SROPC dedicated itself instead to rebuild-

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[48] *La Organización Obrera*, 15 February 1919, 1 March 1919 and 8 March 1919; *La Vanguardia*, 6 April 1920, 15 April 1920; *La Organización Obrera*, 1 March 1919; *Federación obrera marítima*, "Los trabajadores del mar no se resignan", flyer dated 20 February 1919.

[49] *La Organización Obrera*, 22 February 1919 and 22 March 1919; Prefectura General de Puertos, *Memoria del año 1919*, Buenos Aires, 1919; 45–48. The ship-owners' and contractors' lobby affiliated with the ANT actively resisted the decree; cf. *La Oficialización de los trabajos portuarios*, Buenos Aires: Oficina de Publicaciones de la Asocación Nacional del Trabajo, 1921; Federación Obrera Marítima, *Memoria 1918– 1919*, Buenos Aires, 1920, 59–62. A long list of individual shipping and contracting concerns which had bowed to the decree by April 7 was published in *La Vanguardia* 7 April 1919. Arguments in opposition to the decree can be consulted in various issues of the ANT newspaper *La Concordia* throughout the winter of 1919.

[50] *La Unión del Marino*, August 1919.

ing the national authority of its pre-war heyday, struggling in particular to prevent the extension of FOM power to the craft-based resistance societies still active in the ports of the littoral.

In early December, a congress of dockworkers was convened in Buenos Aires to establish the Regional Federation of Port Workers and Related Trades (*Federación regional portuaria y anexos*, FRPA), which was affiliated with the FORA-V and responsible for the implementation of local solidarity pacts between anarchist unions. As an alternative to decasualization, the congress proposed a system of revolving work shifts administered by the union, designed to distribute work fairly among casual labourers while rationalizing the supply of labour to suit the contractors' needs. It also called a 48-hour strike in Buenos Aires, to which some 3,000 dockworkers responded, to demand that police restrictions on public assemblies in La Boca be lifted. Finally, the SROPC used the platform to promote reunification between the various sections of dockworkers, with the exception of *Diques y dársenas*—perceived as collaborating with employers to exclude the anarchist union from the Puerto Madero zone.[51]

This was a period marked by a high degree of hostility within organised labour between anarchists and syndicalists. The FOM had acquired national status and extended its model of industrial unionism to key sectors of workers in the port, including railwaymen, flour mill workers and longshoremen themselves. Its inspectors worked hand in hand with prefecture patrols in the enforcement of a rationalized and bureaucratized hiring process, white-collar officers were considered partners in the everyday business of managing and supervising work operations, and the possession of a union identification card bearing one's photograph and employment record became a requirement for attending workers' assemblies, catching a ship or simply using such facilities as union dining halls. Worse still, from the perspective of veteran anarchists, the salaried leadership of the FOM gradually lost its renegade status in shipping and trading circles, bringing immunity from arrest and social ostracism to a previously persecuted group of seasoned revolutionaries, most of whom had experienced exile or illegality in a not-so-distant past.[52]

In the port of Buenos Aires, the ideological rivalry between anarchist and syndicalist trade union federations, exacerbated by turf wars between the longshoremen's and mariners' organisations, spawned periodic outbreaks of violence. When it came to workplace activism, however, the tacit solidarity pacts of the past tended to revive cooperation between different sectors of dockside labour, in spite of the ideological and organisational quarrels which plagued their unions.

Throughout the year 1920, for example, the warehouse and Central Produce Market workers carried out a strike which the FOM and all four dockworkers' sections supported by boycotting designated consignees. A full-fledged three-week longshoremen's strike, which mobilized over 8,000 workers, received the support of the autonomous cartmen's union in the form of solidarity strikes. On numerous occasions, the various sections of dockworkers concluded informal agreements to thwart the customs' authority's attempts to place ANT work teams. It is the existence of common strategic objectives at the level of everyday class conflict, rather than the simple fact of doctrinal compromise, that explains why in mid-November of 1920, the two most antagonistic branches of dockworkers' unionism formed a Pro-Unification Committee (*Comité pro-unificación*) during a massive anarchist assembly in La Boca. Initially created by the SROPC

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[51] *Tribuna Proletaria*, 27 November 1919 and 28 November 1919; Policía Federal, Sección Orden Social, Memoria de investigaciones 1919, 49.

[52] Prefectura General de Puertos, Copiador de Notas n. 19, 11/15/1919. Policía de la Capital, sección 24, Copiador n. 216, 03/03/1920 & 03/05/1920; 57–65 & 69–72.

and *Diques y dársenas* to coordinate activities in La Boca and Puerto Madero, the committee soon proposed a full merger between them, on the condition that the SROPC declare itself autonomous from the national anarchist federation.

When *Diques y dársenas* and the coal heavers' union accepted the deal, an SROPC assembly, in defiance of ideologically-motivated FORA-V directives, voted to follow suit. United against the ANT's drive for a full open shop, warring factions of organised longshoremen shed their doctrinal rivalries while claiming a common heritage of militancy—much as they had in the days of anarchist/Catholic unity against the *Protectora* in 1905–07. The unified dockworkers' union temporarily dropped its "resistance society" denomination, but preserved such anarchist trademarks as the refusal of compulsory arbitration, the defence of informality in the formation and placement of work gangs, the commitment to strikes and boycotts, and solidarity with other trades across ethnic, regional and national boundaries. Accordingly, its appearance was viewed by the authorities as a major threat to the stability of labour relations in the port and along the littoral.[53]

While seemingly "pro-labour", the government's policies and their acceptance by nominally revolutionary unions reflected a shared recognition, in view of past work conflicts and job market insecurity, of the comparative economic advantages of social peace. In circumstances when the FOM declared a partial boycott rather than a general paralyzation of trade, the Yrigoyen administration found it more effective to lean on the union's authority and competence than to risk a general strike by protecting the interests of a private firm. A 13-monthlong mariners' strike against Mihánovich, which severely marred the coastal shipping industry and produced a decisive outcome in 1921, provides a good example of how the perception of national interest weighed decisively on the State's determination to uphold a commitment to impartiality which, at crucial moments, served the proclaimed objectives of syndicalist trade unionism.

In 1920 the Mihánovich line, which owned 70 percent of the country's coastal fleet, began hoisting the Uruguayan banner as a means of circumventing this situation. The union's ability to wage a prolonged battle against the "*tiburón*" (the "shark", as its founder was known among workers) rested on a vast network of sections and solidarity pacts with provincial, Uruguayan and Paraguayan labour movements, coordinated by highly mobile union commissions formed by active mariners who possessed extraordinary capabilities for propaganda and agitation.

Over the course of the conflicts, which dragged on for over a year, FOM strike commissions and placement teams developed tight working arrangements with the smaller firms eager to gain shares of the business lost by Mihánovich, thereby reinforcing the union's authority in littoral ports and setting a durable precedent for future alliances between federalist trade unions and small private capital. Large ship owners, railway companies and agro-export lobbies were fully united, on the other hand, in the battle against the FOM and dockworkers' unions, in conjunction with political forces opposed to the personalist reign of Hipólito Yrigoyen.

On March 8, 1921, a euphoric assembly vote in La Boca's Verdi Theatre brought the epic standoff with Mihánovich to an end. The FOM obtained guarantees that the company would accept union control over its hiring practices and switch the banners on ships displaying Uruguayan colours, as well as a commitment to enforce union standards on fleets belonging to its Paraguayan and Uruguayan branches.[54] The magnitude of the federation's victory over the most powerful

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[53] *La Vanguardia*, 15 December 1920; Prefectura General de Puertos, Copiador de Notas n. 3, 01/12/1921.

[54] On the 1921 strike see Cf. Jeremy Adelman, "State and Labour in Argentina: The Portworkers of Buenos Aires, 1910–1921", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 25, 1993: 73–102.

shipping concern in Latin America, an unmistakable demonstration both of trade union power and of the feasibility of syndicalist aspirations, comforted the leaderships of both mariners' and officers' unions in their efforts to achieve the full unification of categories throughout the industry.

This outcome infuriated the ANT, which immediately unleashed a full-scale campaign against what it perceived as the imposition of a "soviet" by the FOM and longshoremen's unions, decried as "the allpowerful masters of the port".[55] And while the government also felt the burden of the Association's wrath, it activated all the administrative mechanisms in its power to restrain the everyday belligerence of organised labour. In response, the joint leadership of the unified longshoremen's unions, *Diques y dársenas* and the SROPC "*Boca y Barracas*", ordered that all cartmen working in the port would have to be affiliated with a resistance society, signalling a return of the SROPC, which had left the FORA-V as a condition for unification, to anarchist criteria, even as it remained allied with its rival. Just as the anarchist and Catholic dockworkers' societies had joined ranks in 1905 to offset an open-shop drive, two ideologically opposed and historically antagonistic unions braced for a showdown with the advocates of "free labour" in the port.

Relying on the "entente" between the anarchist and syndicalist FORAs decreed by the eleventh congress of the FORA-IX, and on the enthusiasm provoked by the mariners' triumph, the longshoremen's unions called for a general strike that unleashed the full weight of State repression against them. Military forces were brought in to patrol the docks, the ANT took control of hiring, and the Patriotic League terrorized union members as well as uncooperative employers, staving off strikers at gunpoint. Several members of the FOM leadership, so often perceived as the beneficiaries of government benevolence, were detained by the police as they improvised harangues on Plaza Solis in La Boca.[56]

Despite conditions of economic depression and scarcity of hire, the strike mobilized an estimated 10,000 mariners, 6,000 shipyard workers, 2,000 flour mill workers, 10,000 longshoremen, 5,000 cartmen and 3,000 additional port workers in Buenos Aires alone.[57] Officers' unions in the merchant marine, however, many of whose members leaned politically toward the Radical Civic Union, precipitated defeat by deserting the movement in June and resuming work on blackleg-manned ships.

Days later the two FORAs, in a state of organisational disarray, put an end to the general strike. The alliance between syndicalists and anarchists collapsed, a resounding defeat reminiscent of the worst State crackdowns of the first decade of the century. Ship captains and other white-collar personnel would return to syndicalist trade unionism, briefly in the late 1920s and more markedly in the early Peronist era two decades later; but their desertion of the FOM in 1921 spelled the end of Yrigoyen's ability to influence maritime workers' unions, and the end of their dominance within the larger labour movement.

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[55] *La Concordia*, 5 May 1921.

[56] *La Vanguardia*, 20 April 1921, 8 May 1921 and 3 June 1921; *La Concordia*, 24 May 1921 and 26 May 1921; *La Prensa*, 12 May 1921, 13 May 1921, and 14 May 1921; Asociación Nacional del Trabajo, *Memoria y Balance 1920–1921*, Buenos Aires, 1921, 57; *Boletín de Servicios de la Asociación Nacional del Trabajo*, 20 May 1921 and 5 June 1921; Sandra McGee Deutch, *Counterrevolution in Argentina, 1900–1932: The Argentine Patriotic League*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986, 120–121.

[57] *La Organización Obrera*, 4 June 1921 and 18 June 1921; *La Vanguardia*, 31 May 1921 and 1 June 1921.

It was a radicalized, revolutionary syndicalist FOM, joined by the Shipyard Workers' Federation (*Federación obrera en construcciones navales*, or FOCN) and by *Diques y dársenas* on the Puerto Madero docks that brought organised labour on the waterfront back from the brink of extinction. They dominated the assembly in La Boca that gave birth in 1923 to the Argentine Syndicalist Union (*Unión sindical argentina*, or USA) in replacement of the decimated FORA-IX, and together set out to reassert control while reviving the solidarity pacts of old between Buenos Aires and the interior.

And while the SROPC promptly reorganised itself in La Boca with loose ties to the anarchist FORA-V,[58] a new anarchist organisation, the Argentine Libertarian Alliance (*Alianza libertaria argentina*, ALA), emerged on the scene with a very different agenda. It federated a loose alliance of small craft societies, radical ethnic associations and political groups associated with "anarcho-bolshevism", among them a group of dissident anarchist labour activists led by Rodolfo Gonzalez Pacheco.

A prominent labour figure in the ALA was Italian shipyard brazier Atilio Biondi, who led many of the Alliance's members into the USA. Within the FOM, the ALA was active in sailors' and firemen's' sections, and would exert tangible influence in mariners' assemblies from 1924 onward, accompanying the ascendancy to leadership rank of one of its most well-remembered activists, Juan Antonio Morán.

On the docks, an agitational group calling itself the AnarchoCommunist Port Workers' Group (*Agrupación comunista anárquica de los obreros del Puerto*), critical of the SROPC for having erred from its original doctrine, appeared during the 1921 general strike and issued frequent statements in *El Libertario*, organ of the ALA, as well as in Gonzalez Pacheco's *La Antorcha* ("The Torch"). The most visible impact of these groups in the port was the resurgence of the economic sabotage—"propaganda by the deed"—practiced by early resistance societies, particularly in the shipyard braziers' union, where the use of direct action tactics never wavered throughout the first half of the century. The creation of the ALA coincided with the assassination of Lieutenant Colonel Héctor Varela, author of the Patagonia massacres in 1921 and 1922, by a young German anarchist named Kurt Wilckens. His murder on June 16 provoked a nationwide general strike called by the USA and FORA-V, during which the ALA lobbied intensively among waterfront unions for the adoption of revolutionary violence as a mode of action.[59]

The influence of the Russian Revolution made itself felt in other ways as well. The maritime cooks' and stewards' section, formed in 1916 by the socialist Trade Union Propaganda Committee (*Comité de propaganda gremial*), represented a decisive organised force among mariners due to the combination of its affinities with the community of landed workers and its strategic location of the catering department in the work process on board. During the congress of the FOM which followed the creation of the USA, its representatives, Ramón Suarez and Marcelino Lage, made a strong bid to substitute communist for syndicalist criteria in the new statutes, to centralize the union's federalist structure and to obtain its affiliation with the red international of trade unions based in Moscow. The vote on these motions resulted in their defeat by only a narrow margin, which testifies to an unprecedented incursion of political debate into trade union life. While they failed to undermine the federation's revolutionary syndicalist principles, the presence of Suárez

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[58] *Boletín de servicios de la Asociación Nacional del Trabajo*, 5 March 1922; Policía de la Capital, sección 24, Copiador de Notas n. 233, 02/24/1922.

[59] *La Antorcha*, 1 February 1924, 6 May 1924, 25 September 1925, 9 September 1925 and 16 October 1925.

and Lage in the elected leadership body proves that communist labour activists were not treated with ostracism, even in the traditional anarcho-syndicalist organisational culture of waterfront unionism.[60]

Finally, the Radical Civic Union's local structure of political patronage, with its custom of performing petty favours and sponsoring charity ventures, grew in importance during the early 1920s. One of its "sub-committees" in La Boca, "*La Marina*", aimed to "unite all the sailors and ancillary groups … so that their needs can be listened to … and action taken to transmit or obtain from congressional representatives, and then from the national government, every improvement and regulation which may be necessary to allow them to improve their standards of living and the right to live modestly but decently".[61] The UCR, already influential among the officers' unions, would use this newfound social legitimacy in the quayside community to lure portions of the male working-class electorate away from the Socialist Party, much to the benefit of welfare reform insofar as locally familiar political forces rivalled in their eagerness to draft protective legislation. With respect to their direct incidence on everyday matters of waterfront work, however, during the presidency of Marcelo Alvear these committees quickly burgeoned into the feared instruments of State-sponsored gangsterism on the docks.

The defeat and resurgence of anarchist and syndicalist unions

Ultimately, the USA was crippled by the desertion of key allies during a successful 1924 strike against the adoption of a State-administered retirement pension system. The syndicalist federation proved unable to replace the FORA-IX nationally as a strong rear guard for the FOM. Later that year a nation-wide general strike against the increasingly powerful trans-Atlantic shipping lobby, the ocean liner ship captains union, the ANT and the Alvearist government, ended in defeat, prompting the entire Federal Council of the FOM to resign under criticism from the rank-and-file.[62]

For the first time since the pre-war era, sections of the maritime workers' federation in Buenos Aires and the river ports operated without a coordinating body. Opposition to a decentralized, federalist system which empowered rank-and-file workers to determine the national policies of the trade union movement was now total among officers, who had lost the benefits of retirement pensions and had been beached for much of the year. They would, with the backing of socialist reformers in La Boca, Alvearist maritime prefect Ricardo Hermelo, disgruntled ex-FOM leader Francisco García, the Mihánovich line and the coastal shipping lobby, support an effort to centralize waterfront unionism and enforce a new labour code for the merchant marine that would legally curb the workers' right to strike.

The Maritime Workers' Union (*Unión obrera maritima*, or UOM), created in December 1924 with a prominent ex-FOM activist, the socialist Vicente Tadich, at its helm, became the instrument of this ambition.[63] In the late 1930s and early 1940s, however, this conservative organisation—which became the company union of the Dodero (ex-Mihánovich) fleet—would continue to face stiff competition from the FOM, and syndicalist traditions would subsume it in 1946 when the

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[60] *La Unión del Marino*, June 1923and September 1923; *Bandera Proletaria*, 26 May 1923 and 9 June 1923.

[61] *La Epoca*, 26 March 1922.

[62] *La Vanguardia*, 24 November 1924.

[63] *La Internacional*, 24 September 1925; Prefectura General Marítima, Memoria 1925, 69–71; *La Vanguardia*, 9 August 1925, 16 August 1925, 1 September 1925 and 3 September 1927.

two merged into an independent federation of all maritime workers to resist the inroads of the Peronist State.

Denunciations of abuses by unchecked ship-owning firms, of job discrimination against seasoned mariners with a trade union past, of poor compliance with safety regulations, and of direct involvement of the prefecture in job allocation and deskilling became commonplace in the aftermath of the FOM's defeat in 1924. The UOM was successful only in controlling small vessels in the port of Buenos Aires, and the tacit support of Mihánovich earned the union the derogatory label by which workers designated the ANT: "*la patronal*"—"the bosses' union".

Before long the UOM's centralized organisational scheme, which thwarted the syndicalist, assembly-based deliberative tradition of both officers and mariners' unions, came under fire. It undermined informal arrangements which had hitherto ensured the practical and consensual enforcement of rules, regulations and standards on board the ships. In mid-1927, a newly created federation of officers' unions, the Federation of Officers of the Merchant Marine (*Federación de oficiales de la marina mercante*, FOMM) consulted Francisco García on his thoughts about the path which marine unionism should take. Significantly, the secretary of the new entity, Jose Segade, was also president of the ocean liner captain's union which had initiated the subversion of FOM control over Atlantic coast crews in 1924.

The socialist leadership of the UOM took vociferous exception to García's return in any capacity, and, in unison with the Alvearist authorities, accused Segade of plotting labour conflicts to rally electoral support for Hipolito Yrigoyen's presidential election campaign.[64] In reality, the officers had simply assessed the damage incurred by the disappearance of effective workplace cooperation between strong seamen's and officers' unions. Their negotiations with García resulted in the creation of the Maritime Relations Council (*Consejo de relaciones maritime*), a transitional leadership body which unified the FOM and FOMM against the policies of the State and the ANT.

On November 23, nearly 3,000 mariners and seamen attended an assembly in la Boca's Verdi Theatre during which FOM secretary Antonio Morán, Segade and García renewed with syndicalist federalism and sealed a formal solidarity pact. The FOM was reorganised into five sections (sailors and deck foremen, skippers, conductors and machinists, firemen, stewards, and cooks) and reactivated its interior branches. During 1927 and 1928, the picture of the quayside community was one of relative openness and political pluralism, and environment in which the syndicalist FOM was poised to renew with the organisation and proselytism of its glorious past.[65]

The SROPC also resurfaced with some 2,000 affiliates, the backing of the anarchist FORA and solidarity pacts with the five other resistance societies in the port. It resorted to boycotts and periodic 24-hour walkouts to impose its authority over hiring, and succeeded in paralyzing the entire port in a general strike against the imposition of a government-issued identification card on longshoremen seeking work. A popular rallying cry during this protest was the demand that foremen be given full sovereignty in shape-ups, and all representatives of "authority" be chased from the docks.[66] Police crackdowns ensued and SROPC leaders were jailed in the early months

[64] *La Vanguardia*, 5 April 1927, 24 June 1927 and 2 September 1927; *La Unión del Marino*, August 1927.

[65] *Bandera Proletaria*, 8 October 1927, 14 October 1927 and 26 November 1927; *La Vanguardia*, 1 December 1927; *La Protesta*, 24 October 1926 and 10 April 1927; *La Prensa*, January 1927–June 1927; *Libertad*, 9 January 1928; Prefectura General Marítima, Memoria 1927, 54.

[66] *La Protesta*, 29 November 1927, 21 December 1927, 29 Decemeber 1927, 31 December 1927 and 21 January 1928; Prefectura General Maritima, Memoria 1927, 60.

of 1928; the syndicalist FOM continued to prefer Geronimo Schizzi's *Diques y dársenas* union to José Damonte's revived anarcho-communist movement.[67]

When the FOM struck against Mihánovich in the winter of 1928, however, reactivating nationwide solidarity movements and attracting international support from Paraguayan and Uruguayan unions, the anarchist resistance societies, emboldened by the victory of a general strike in the port of Rosario, rallied the cause. Even the South American secretariat of the Communist International, which printed a manifesto urging trade unions throughout the continent to form "friends' groups" in support of the Argentine seamen, joined the movement. Communist mariners grouped in the Communist Maritime Group (*Agrupación comunista maritima*) were instrumental in recruiting Paraguayan and Yugoslav sailors, whom the company sought to hire as blacklegs, into the FOM, which was still led by a jailed former anarchist of the ALA, Antonio Morán.[68] The strike achieved significant wage gains and resulted, the following year, in the abolition of the ANT and the Patriotic League, a welcome and hard-earned respite ahead of more State-sponsored crackdowns and, ultimately, the 1930 military coup.

Solidarity and Federalism: an antidote to atavistic nationalism

Because of the wholesale deportation of activists under the 1902 Residency Law and 1910 Law of National Defence, the core of leaders of SROPC from 1904 onward were of Argentine nationality despite the overwhelmingly foreign constituency of the working class. And whereas historians are correct to indicate the growing importance of suffrage and national political incorporation following the 1912 Sáenz Peña Law, the FOM, which incorporated members of Radical Civic Union, socialist and later communist obedience, continued, throughout the first half of the century, to advocate anarcho-syndicalist precepts of regionalism, federalism and organisational autonomy from the State, principles that were rooted in the peculiar nature of the labour process of the industry.

The anarchist longshoremen and their allies in related trades and crafts recruited migrant and rural workers of Argentine descent, opposing nativist and nationalist enemies with appeals to internationalism and cosmopolitanism, and carving a space for themselves in the labour market and community institutions that was still apparent in the 1940s. The syndicalist maritime workers, on the other hand, who became increasingly drawn to nationalism and sovereignty in the era of import-substitution industrialization and merchant marine development, played a crucial role in incorporating linguistically and ethnically diverse sectors of the immigrant working class, in particular Yugoslav and Paraguayan associations, well into the Peronist era.

The stigmatization of both anarchist and syndicalist unions as "foreign" and "anti-national", a mainstay of elite campaigns against them since 1900, gained momentum as a result of their historic embeddedness in the cosmopolitan quayside district of La Boca del Riachuelo, a bastion of immigrant traditions and sociability in Buenos Aires, and the crucible of the nationwide federative networking described here. The neighbourhood, and its labour movements, became more ominously viewed as dangerously undisciplined in the 1940s and 1950s, in part because it contin-

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[67] *Bandera Proletaria*, 2 June 1928; *Libertad*, 6 June 1928; *El Obrero Portuario*, 1 June 1928.

[68] *Bandera Proletaria*, 09/27/1928; *La Internacional* 26 March 1927, 20 October 1928, 27 October 1928 and 20 April 1929; *El Marino Rojo*, 15 October 1928 and 13 November 1928; *La Voz del Marino*, 21 October 1928; *Boletín de Servicios de la Asociación del Trabajo*, 20 October 1928.

ued to be associated with anarcho-syndicalist resistance, ethnic diversity and socialist cultural activism.[69]

The FORA-affiliated SROPC and syndicalist FOM both remained relevant to the maritime transport industry in the inter-war period despite their strategic national decline; the former by controlling localized labour markets and resisting decasualization, and the latter as a core component of the revived USA, which after 1936 led the opposition to the centralized industrial unionism of the socialist and communist-driven National Confederation of Labour (*Confederación general del trabajo*, or CGT).[70]

Their embrace of anarchist-inspired federalism as "a condition of social liberation through the free association of decentralized polities" was predicated on "their diversity and the maintenance of differences between them". The idea was to uphold the sovereignty of each federated entity, "not by achieving harmony and reconciliation, but rather by maintaining a vital balance between conflicting interests and aspirations, and an awareness of cultural community that remained open to dialogue with the outside".[71]

In the port of Buenos Aires and its radius of influence along the littoral, anarchists, even when circumstances of struggle caused them to compromise with social Catholic and syndicalist adversaries, had struggled for decades for the convergence of European and American-born workers behind an ideal of anti-capitalist resistance through direct action unionism, developing cross-national solidarities and provoking far-flung insurgencies. They responded to atavistic nativism and ethnic stigmatization with federalism, preserving, in the classic tradition of Proudhon, "local spontaneities" through "respect of their diversity",[72] ritually invoking social revolution and class emancipation, formulating a hierarchy of events and representations designed to inscribe the experience of struggle in the social memory of localities throughout the littoral.

The contours of their actions were rooted in concrete labour processes, specific spatial and cultural settings, and a practice of federative networking rendered possible by the constant flow of workers, activists and vessels in and out of Buenos Aires, where their power to hold the agro-export economy hostage was enormous. Casual port workers and craftsmen's trades dominated the movement; but even when specialized hierarchies and strong institutions attracted mariners to a more structured syndicalist model of trade unionism, the mark of libertarian traditions of assembly, direct action and propaganda made itself felt on their performance of protest. Solidly embedded in a local community of immigrant origin, La Boca, and among a highly mobile workforce infused with both "foreign" and "native" elements, anarchists and syndicalists projected their promethean, modernist emancipatory discourse onto a labour movement which they conceived, absent meaningful political and social rights, as performing on a transregional and supranational stage.

Finally, the importance in these professions of informal relations at work and in the community shielded them, prior to the rise of the welfare State, from the discipline of rationalized management and the trappings of bureaucratic governance. In the 1930s and 1940s, strategies

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[69] Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, "Solidarity, Stigma, and Repertoires of Memory: The Foreigner and the Nation in La Boca del Riachuelo, Buenos Aires, mid-19th to mid20th Century", *Latin American Essays, MACLAS*, vol. XIX, 2006.

[70] Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, "A Laboratory of Argentine Labour Movements: Men's Work, Trade Unions and Social Identities on the Buenos Aires Waterfront, 1900–1950", Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2001.

[71] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, "Du principe fédératif et de la nécessité de reconstituer le parti de la révolution" (1863), cited by Pierre Ansart, *Marx et l'anarchisme*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969, 266–267.

[72] Ibid., 266.

of resistance strikingly similar to those chronicled here delayed their submission to an orderly model of nationalized citizenship under the auspices of the State. Vilified by nationalists as agents of "foreign ideas", by government agencies as "instruments of private capital", and by modern industrial labour movements as "utopian", anarcho-syndicalists produced a heritage on the ports and on the rivers of Argentina that is of singular relevance to national history; one that would be relegated, after the war, to the dustbin of an imagined disorderly, cosmopolitan and decidedly pre-national past.

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Constructing Syndicalism and Anarchism Globally:
The transnational making of the syndicalist movement in São Paulo, Brazil, 1895–1935

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The emergence of Brazilian anarchism and syndicalism

Anarchism, revolutionary syndicalism, and socialism were important elements in the making of the working class in late 19th and early 20th century Brazil, as elsewhere. Anarchism was an important chapter in the history of political thought and action in Brazil and—with syndicalism and socialism—shaped the workers' movement in a number of ways, and also influenced a range of workers' social, recreational and cultural activities. The circulation of anarchist, syndicalist, and socialist ideas through campaigns, demonstrations, newspapers and other publications (as well as through recreational activities and autonomous forms of popular and proletarian organisation, drawing on various religious and cultural traditions) demonstrates the numerous channels and tools that were involved in this politicization of social relationships.

These movements transmitted values and behaviour that questioned and challenged established social hierarchies, and the traditional mentality that served to exclude most workers to stay out of politics, institutional or not. In the late 19th century, Brazil underwent important transformations, with the abolition of slavery (1888) and the establishment of the republican regime (1889); however, these did not affect the extremely unequal social structure. Although the end of the monarchy resulted from quite a heterogeneous movement, with some popular participation, the victorious republican project was quick to eliminate the more radical proposals. It was closely linked to the interests of coffee planters living in São Paulo, who drew from liberal thought only what they needed, rejecting any expansion of the republican project that would open up broad political participation.

The spread of republican ideas was accompanied by accelerating modernization, involving secularization, industrial development, urbanization, and immigration. These historical processes occurred most intensely in some regions, particularly the southeast, between the years 1880 and 1920. They changed traditional ways of life, and led to the development of new social actors, especially in the cities: the industrial bourgeoisie, and the proletarian and middle classes.[1] How-

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[1] Marco Pamplona, *Revoltas, repúblicas e cidadania. Nova York e Rio de Janeiro na consolidação da ordem republicana*, Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2003.

ever, slavery left an imprint, decisively influencing the very process of becoming a citizen; older power relations and behaviour continued in the new context. In a society long dominated by the patriarchal family, the predominance of private power and with a weak distinction between public and private, there was a marked imbalance between the vast rural areas and the increasingly influential cities, which had profound social effects.[2]

Those who turned to anarchism in different parts of the world were part of a common international project, but in each country workers used the language and methods of anarchism to provide answers to concrete local problems and concerns. The franchise rules in the Republic established a restricted citizenship based on a franchise qualified by economic and literacy criteria. Since liberal democracy was then a sort of farce, those excluded from citizenship sought other means of political action. Thus, anarchism and syndicalism—mainly the latter—appeared as effective and concrete forms of political action, as Sheldon Maram, Angelo Trento and Michael Hall, among others, have stressed.[3]

It was precisely growing disillusionment with the First Republic (1889–1930) that led many to embrace the radical ideology of anarchism. This is clear, for instance, from the trajectory of two important libertarian militants in São Paulo, the lawyer Benjamín Mota[4] and the worker-typographer Edgard Leuenroth.[5] Both had once placed their hopes for social transformation in a change of the government. A similar route was followed by republican Italian immigrants, who in Brazil began to question even radical Mazzinian republicanism, and come embrace anarchism. Among this group was Giulio Sorelli (see below).

In the context of Brazil of the First Republic, labour struggles and claims—influenced partly by anarchism—were thus, in a sense, also an effort to democratize society. These were not only about improving wages and reducing work days, but also an effort to achieve democratic conditions and civil rights, so that the workers' movement could be recognized as a legitimate part of society. The State and entrepreneurs, of course, feared the actions of these anarchist and syndicalist groups, often considered a police matter, repressing them severely.

Associations of workers, usually organised by trade, had existed in Brazil since the 19th century, mainly in the cities, where there was a continuous presence of craftsmen, as well as workers in the building, port and railroad sectors. These sectors grew from 1860, with the urbanization

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[2] Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *Raízes do Brasil*, São Paulo: Companhia. das Letras, 1997, 1048.

[3] Sheldon Leslie Maram, *Anarquistas, imigrantes e o movimento operário brasileiro. 1890–1920*, Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1979; Angelo Trento, *Là dov'è la raccolta del caffè. L'emigrazione italiana in Brasile, 1875–1940.* Padova, Antenore, 1984; Michael M. Hall and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, *A classe operária no Brasil, 1889–1930. Documentos*, vol. 1: *O movimento operário*, São Paulo, 1979.

[4] Benjamín Mota, a young republican lawyer from São Paulo, formed a revolutionary group on his return from a trip to Paris, and from 1897 adhered to anarchism. The following year, he wrote one of the first books by a Brazilian author on anarchist ideas, *Rebeldias* ("Rebelliousness"). He edited the newspaper *O Rebate* ("The Reply") and the anti-clerical journal *A Lanterna* ("The Lantern"), and collaborated on several other newspapers. As a lawyer, he defended many anarchists, syndicalists and socialists who were arrested and threatened with expulsion.

[5] Edgard Leuenroth was born in São Paulo state in 1881, and grew up in São Paulo city. His father was from Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, at that time a province of the Austrian-Hungary Empire; his mother was Brazilian. A typesetter, he was a member of the *Circulo Socialista*—which followed the principles of the Labour and Socialist International—until 1903 when he shifted to anarchism. A prominent writer and speaker, he helped found the print workers' union in 1904, in which his brother, João, also played an important role. Edgard succeeded Mota as editor of *A Lanterna*, and was also centrally involved in editing *Luta Operária* ("Workers' Struggle"), which was the organ of the Worker Federation of São Paulo (FOSP), *A Folha do Povo* ("Leaf of the People", later a daily), *A Guerra Social*, *Ecléctica*, *A Plebe* ("The Plebians", later a daily), and *Ação Directa* ("Direct Action", a daily). In 1917, he was prosecuted as alleged mastermind of that year's general strike. He died in 1968.

that followed Brazil's increasing integration into international markets, particularly through an explosive expansion of coffee and rubber exports. At the end of the 19th century, Rio de Janeiro, then capital of the country, had about 700,000 inhabitants. Industrialization began slowly with textile production, especially in Bahia, which was then transferred to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo during the 1870s. Following a steady industrial growth during the first three decades of the 20th century, including an extraordinary acceleration during World War I, São Paulo became the largest industrial centre in the country.

Until the last decade of the 19th century, urban workers' associations took, almost exclusively, the form of mutual aid societies, which best expressed a work environment in which craftsmen prevailed; besides, the constitution of the Empire had forbidden the formation of unions. Only with the Republic did trade union organisations begin to emerge, expanding significantly in the early years of the 20th century—especially in São Paulo, which experienced a demographic explosion at the turn of the century. Along with the big industries, especially the production of food and clothing, and the building sector, São Paulo, had a constellation of medium and small workshops, overlapping with domestic production. Thus, its evolving labour movement involved, besides factory workers, a wide variety of masons, carpenters, labourers, tailors, haters, waiters, sandmen, smiths and so on.

Union statutes—such as the one we present below from the Resistance League of Male and Female Workers of the Textile Factories of São Paulo—clearly show the trade union character of the new labour associations:[6]

> Everyone who works in those factories can join the League, including workers in weaving and in spinning, dyeing, machinery, and so on. Of any age, irrespective of colour and nationality … The aim of the League is that the workers of both sexes have—through unity—the necessary strength to deal with their employers, to reduce the hours of work and to increase their wages gradually …

> This Society is governed by an Administrative Commission and an Executive Committee: the Administrative Committee is composed of four men and four women, delegates for each factory commission belonging to the League. The delegates will be elected separately by workers of the factory to which they belong and have the following tasks: 1) to direct the administration of the Society; 2) to collect monthly membership dues from the members and to pass them to the treasurer (…).

> The funds raised with the amounts deposited serve: a) as grants to members in the case of a strike, when this has been decided by the general assembly; b) to assist members, victims of unfair persecution by the employers; c) for all the expenses necessary for the proper functioning of the Society.

The usual basis of this labour organising, from the end of the 19th century, was the union by occupation, which prevailed until the twenties.

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[6] "Estatutos da Liga de Resistência dos Operários e Operárias das Fábricas de Tecidos de São Paulo", *Gazeta Operária* ("Workers Gazette"), 30 November 1902. The Italian socialist newspaper *Avanti!* ("Forward!") of São Paulo, a weekly in that period, published the official newsletter and notices of this textile union. Named after *Avanti!* In Italy, it was founded in 1900, and served as important reference point for São Paulo workers during the twelve years it was published (1900–1908; 1914–1917; 1919). It was written in Italian, with a few rare exceptions, like the manifesto of May 1907.

The unions operated in varying situations, and, while though many had an irregular life, were involved in local federations, usually organised by state or by city. Examples include the Local Federation of Workers of Santos (FOLS), the main union centre in the harbour city from which coffee was exported, and which received the majority of immigrants; the Workers' Federation of Rio de Janeiro (FORJ); the Workers' Federation of the State of Rio Grande do Sul (FORGS); and the Workers' Federation of São Paulo (FOSP), which included the unions in São Paulo city and São Paulo state (except for Santos). The FOSP was the main local labour federation in the country between 1905 and 1912.

All of these local federations—which were in São Paulo, Santos and Porto Alegre the main, and leading, unions—were connected to the Brazilian Workers Confederation (COB). The COB was created at a national labour congress of 1906, and operated until 1909, and then again from 1913 and 1915. It should be noted, however, that the COB did not have the national character to which it aspired. What prevailed was the orientation of union activity to the local level, although the COB and its newspaper *A Voz do Trabalhador* ("The Voice of the Worker") enabled a minimum exchange of information between the movements in various parts of the country.[7] The local union federations preceded the COB, and survived its temporary, and then its permanent, disappearance.

In 1906, the Italian revolutionary syndicalist leader Alceste De Ambris described the activity of the FOSP with great enthusiasm:[8]

> The federation is working and it's assuming an ever more international character, although the mass of organised workers consists mostly of Italians. The printers, the lithographers, the hatters, the bricklayers, railroad workers, etc., had now their own leagues. The Workers' Federation of São Paulo had its first hard test in the great railway strike this year, which was followed by a general strike in the city of São Paulo. Despite the errors, the deficiency, the weakness—of course, unavoidable when you try something new that had not been tried before—the railway strike, judged objectively as a social phenomenon, is a precious and unexpected indication of the relative maturity and strength within the bosom of the working class living in the State of São Paulo.

In 1907, when the first great general strike in the city of São Paulo for the eight hour day took place, the FOSP had more than 3,000 members in twenty different trade unions.[9] That year, according to the national industrial census, there were almost 25,000 manufacturing workers in São

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[7] Cláudio Batalha, *Movimento operário na Primeira República*, Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2000, 14–21.

[8] Alceste De Ambris, "Il movimento operaio nello Stato di São Paulo", *Il Brasile e gli italiani*, Florence, 1906, 845. De Ambris, who lived in Brazil between 1898 and 1903, and again in the period 1908–1911, was one of the main labour leaders in the first trade-unions in São Paulo at the beginning of the 20th century; he remained in correspondence with the Paulista labour movement while he was in Italy.

[9] There were trade unions for vehicle workers; metal and steel workers; textile workers; carpenters and workers in ebony; masons; decorators; plumbers and tinsmiths; shoemakers; bakers; workers in pasta mills; glassmakers; marble workers; printers; hatters; waiters; goldsmiths; garment workers; brick carriers; and two plantbased unions, one uniting the different trades at the Matarazzo mill (the biggest of this industrial sector in the city), and that one uniting the women workers of the great Paulista Laundry. See "Movimento Operaio", "Movimento Sindacale", "La conquista delle otto ore", *Avanti!* from n. 1683, May 2, 1907 to n. 1706, May 29, 1907. Also see *A Lucta Proletaria*, the official journal of the FOSP, in 1907, and *La Battaglia*, of the same year. See also the Repatriation Trial against Giulio Sorelli, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (ANRJ), MJNI, IJJ7 nr. 179.

Paulo city, out of a total of nearly 300,000 inhabitants—though other records and studies clearly suggest that we ought to duplicate this figure.[10] A few years later (1912), almost 10,000 workers in São Paulo city had joined the FOSP, which was then part of the COB.[11] The unions—which only rarely arose from a transformation of the mutual associations—coexisted with other types of worker organisations, which drew on a large range of identities: mutual aid associations, theatre, football, dancing, educational, cultural and political groups like the socialist and anarchist groups.

The growth and consolidation of industries, and urban labour, during the first decade of the 20th century involved, then, a labour movement in which most unions followed the revolutionary syndicalist tendency. However, the unions were supported by different ideological currents, including socialists of various leanings, positivists, and republicans, as well as pragmatic trade unionists who used the mediation of lawyers and authorities.

Moreover, reformists, who did not reject institutional political participation by presenting candidates for elections, never entirely disappeared.[12] In some cities, such as Rio de Janeiro, reformism was a consistent theme, especially among the port workers.[13] There was a more or less clear division by general trends at the national level, so that while the orientation of the labour movement in São Paulo state was almost exclusively that of syndicalist direct action, in Rio this approach represented only a minority.

This difference was linked to the different processes of working class formation in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In the former, foreign immigrants prevailed; in Rio, Brazilian workers, usually former slaves and their descendants, were the majority. The latter group of workers had a different tradition of urban struggle, often effective, which used important channels of political communication between the working population and the progressive middle class; moreover, these workers were potentially voters, unlike the immigrants who always resisted naturalization and, therefore, were therefore excluded from possible participation in elections.[14]

Immigration and working class unity

Without immigration, the diffusion of anarchist and syndicalist ideas, as well as those of socialism, and the practices and experiences linked to these currents, would not have taken place in the same way, nor indeed set down roots, in parts of Brazil. With the start of the great migrations to Brazil, radical associations and workers' unions sprung up like mushrooms in the areas—urban enclaves as well as rural ones—where the foreign immigrants' presence reshaped the demographic situation.

The geography of the diffusion and establishment of political and labour militancy in Brazil, along the lines of the main European tendencies, corresponds directly to the regions and urban

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[10] Warren Dean, "A industrialização durante a República Velha", in Boris Fausto (ed.), *História geral da civilização brasileira*, tomo III, vol. 1, Rio de Janeiro—São Paulo: Difel, 1978, 258; Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, "O proletariado industrial na Primeira República", in Boris Fausto (ed.), *História geral da civilização brasileira.* tomo III, vol. 2, Rio de Janeiro—São Paulo: DIFEL, 1978, 141.

[11] According to the daily newspaper *A Noite*, November 19, 1912, and Maram, 56.

[12] Cláudio Batalha, *Movimento operário*, 31–33.

[13] Cláudio Batalha, "Cultura associativa no Rio de Janeiro da Primeira República", in Cláudio Batalha, Fernando Teixeira da Silva, Alexandre Fortes (eds.), *Culturas de classe*, Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 2004, 95–119.

[14] See Antonio Luigi Negro and Flávio Gomes, "Além de Senzalas e Fábricas uma história social do trabalho",

areas that received between 1885–1925 the largest number of European immigrants: the states of southern Brazil, the southern region of Minas Gerais, and, above all, São Paulo state, as well as centres like the federal capital of Rio de Janeiro and the new Minas capital, Belo Horizonte. In cities like Recife and Salvador, and in distant places like Belém and Manaus, and in the urban centres of the northeast, skilled Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and German workers brought traditions of political militancy— anarchist, socialist, or at least, radical republican—that made an important imprint on local associational and social movement traditions. These local traditions were perhaps less intense than those of southern Europe and Germany, but they could not ignored.[15]

It is incorrect to conclude that the making of the workers' organisations—political, unionist, and mutualist—was simply a result of immigration. Brazil had a long history of struggle experiences, and labour and popular associations. The thesis that maintains that the labour movement was of foreign origin—diffused in crude readings of the labour history in Brazil throughout the 20th century—is rooted in the "black legend" that labour was an exotic plant.

This "black legend" was devised by the Brazilian ruling class in the first three decades of the 20th century, mainly for policing purposes. Ignoring centuries of slave and popular revolts, it maintained that European immigrants, alone, spread the seeds of subversion in a Brazil whose population was traditionally orderly, cordial and peaceful. This justified repression by state governments and by the federal government, underpinning the "Adolpho Gordo" law of 1907, which authorised the deportation of activists.[16] Revolt was a dangerous activity in the deeply exclusionary Brazilian society of the time.

However, the deportation law—promoted by a deputy federal representative from São Paulo— did show that strikes, mutinies and working-class movements were more frequent in the states where most workers were immigrants (like São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul) or where (as in Rio de Janeiro and in Minas) immigrant militants were active, prominent participants in labour associations and radical political groups. The fact that left-wing political and labour groups in São Paulo state largely comprised immigrants was due to the simple fact that the immigrants were the majority of workers there.

More than 3,600,000 foreign immigrants arrived in Brazil between 1880 and 1925: more than 1,200,000 during the last decade of the 19th century alone, with the largest concentration in the period 1887–1902, when about 1,600,000 immigrants arrived. While this does not compare to contemporary mass immigration to United States and Argentina, it is important to note that the immigrants to Brazil settled, above all, in regions and cities with a small population (with the exception of Rio de Janeiro city), and were highly concentrated in the southern and south-eastern states, with about 57 percent of immigrants entering São Paulo state from 1880–1925.[17]

Tempo Social: Revista de Sociologia da USP, 18: 1, 2006, 217–240. See also Batalha, *Movimento operário*, 2000.

[15] A case worth mentioning, as an example of this type of connection, is that of Carlos Marighella, born in Salvador, Bahía, in 1911, and a famous Brazilian communist leader between 1932 and 1969 (when he was killed in São Paulo in an ambush). The father of Marighella, Augusto, was a mechanical worker and anarchist from Ferrara in northern Italy, while his mother, Maria Rita de Nascimento, was the black daughter of slaves of *haussá* origins.

[16] According to this law—which was inspired by the 1902 *Ley de Residencia* of Argentina—all foreigners involved in crimes like homicide, the organisation of prostitution, and participation in strikes and mutinies, could be expelled. It was only applicable to the immigrants who had lived in Brazil for less than two years. In 1913, the limitation based on years of residence was removed, and the Gordo Law allowed an extension without limits: all immigrants were susceptible to expulsion. Between 1907 and 1921, 556 immigrants were expelled, according to the Anuário Estatístico do Brasil, Ano V, (1939–40), 1428.

[17] Data from Trento, 23; Michael Hall, "The Origins of Mass Immigration in Brazil", Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univer-

In this period, the Italians stood out clearly in the total immigration, at over 1,370,000, or 38 percent; the Portuguese and Spanish comprised, respectively, 1,100,000 and 600,000 (this is for the period 1890–1930). Other immigrants came from Germany, the Russian Empire (Lithuanians, Polish, Ukrainians, and Armenians), the Ottoman Empire (Lebanese), the Austro-Hungarian empire (Polish, Italian and German-speaking), as well as from Japan (although only after 1907).

The Italians arrival *en masse* before the other groups, particularly from 1885 to 1905, and settled across São Paulo state, in the countryside as well as the cities. Between 1888 and 1920, about 45 percent of the immigrants in this state were from Italy—the north and south were more or less equally represented, and a substantial minority, important for left-wing militancy, were from Tuscany. A further 20 percent were from Spain, with 16 percent from Portugal. The Portuguese settled, above all, in Rio de Janeiro and in Santos in São Paulo state, where they constituted, with the Spaniards, the majority of the working class. Spanish immigrants, like Italians, settled primarily in São Paulo state, and together, the two groups constituted almost the entire working class.

A municipal census for 1893 showed that São Paulo capital's, with nearly 130,000 inhabitants, was already a city of 70,000 immigrants. These constituted moreover almost 85 percent of the workers—the city was a "little Chicago" in Brazil, with the Italians playing the same role in the labour movement as the Germans in the big Illinois city.[18] In the city of Rio, that same year, the percentage of immigrant workers ranged from 39 percent to 54 percent, depending on the sectors examined.[19] In 1900, nearly 90 percent of the workers in the state of São Paulo—both in the coffee and sugar cane plantations (*fazendas*), and in the cities—were immigrants, with the Italians almost 70 percent of the total (and 80 percent in São Paulo city).[20] Twelve years later in the same state, almost 80 percent of workers in textiles (the main Brazilian industry) were foreigners, of whom 65 percent were born in Italy.[21] In São Paulo city, during the first decades of the 20th century, almost 80 percent of workers in the building trades were from Italy, too.[22]

The presence of organised European militants was already evident during the transition from the empire to the republic. This was particularly true of São Paulo state, and above all of São Paulo city. São Paulo did not have a tradition of popular urban struggles like Rio de Janeiro, because the arrival of immigrants coincided with urban and population growth, industrialization and economic diversification, and the resultant demand for jobs. At the end of the 19th century, Italians accounted for 45 percent of the population of the city, while those of African descent were only 6 percent.[23] In São Paulo, the blacks had organised in traditionally religious brotherhoods the past two centuries—some authors consider these to be precursors of mutual aid resistance societies, but their influence on later workers organisations is not clear.

We reject the argument that sees the Brazilian labour movement as characterized by division based on internecine ethnic and racial conflicts along the lines of United States' labour, applied by

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sity, 1971; Maria Thereza Schorer Petrone, "Imigração", in Boris Fausto (ed.), *História geral da civilização brasiliera.*, tomo III, vol. 2, Rio de Janeiro—São Paulo: DIFEL, 1978.

[18] Oscar Monteiro, *Almanak historico-litterario do Estado de São Paulo para o anno de 1896*, São Paulo: Oscar Monteiro, n.d., 264–265.

[19] Boris Fausto, *Trabalho urbano e conflito social*, Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1977, 31.

[20] Antônio Francisco Bandeira Júnior, *A indústria no Estado de São Paulo em 1901*, São Paulo, Tipographia do Diário Oficial, 1901.

[21] *Boletim do Departamento Estadual do Trabalho* ("Bullettin of the State Department of Labour"), São Paulo, 1912.

[22] Maram, 16.

[23] Monteiro, 264–265.

Maram to São Paulo state and Rio de Janiero city.[24] This approach suggests that the great obstacle facing the labour movement were divisions within the class: in São Paulo primarily divisions between the various immigrant groups, in Rio mainly between Brazilians (blacks, above all), and immigrants (especially the Portuguese).

The unions, in general, did not discriminate against blacks, calling on the workers "of all races and all colours" to join their ranks, and struggles.[25] It was also very unusual to find in the labour movement press articles that identified ethnic or racial conflicts as a serious problem, weakening the movement. Nor can widespread ethnic and racial conflict be observed in São Paulo—at least until the migrations from the north-east in the 1950s—for a range of reasons. A crucial factor was demography, since the Italian (and Spanish) sections tended to predominate in quantitative terms. The diffusion of internationalist sentiment due to the great presence of anarchist and socialist groups was also of some importance.

Nonetheless, the national and cultural pluralism that characterized São Paulo city certainly posed difficulties for the construction of a joint national movement of all workers, going beyond the Italian and Spanish majority. First, there was a linguistic difficulty. Many of the newspapers of left-wing political groups, or unions, were produced by immigrant groups. Of course, the Italian-language labour press predominated, but even the German social-democratic workers wrote their newspapers in their own tongue. Meetings commonly saw speakers use several languages, again predominantly Italian, but including German and French as well, considering the numerically important minority groups.

Some groups sought to overcome this by using the local language, Portuguese, but they ended sometimes by returning to their original language. The resolutions of the national labour congresses were always presented in Portuguese, but were generally full of phrases and words badly translated from Italian. This suggests that ethnic and racial divisions in São Paulo would be mainly between the Italian and Spanish majority of workers, who were mostly unionised or sympathetic to unions and left-wing political groups, and the Brazilian and the Portuguese workers.

However, disputes arising from diversity in São Paulo were more common amongst Italians of different regional origins—especially between Italians from the north and south of Italy—than amongst the immigrants as a whole, or between them and the Brazilians. These intra-Italian conflicts were embedded in the different political and religious cultural values of Italians from the north and south, with the latter more susceptible to the nationalist propaganda and monarchist patriotism promoted by the Italian Consulate and by the city's Italian elite, composed of industrialists and bankers. Other problems confronting the unions were the mobility of the immigrants (near the half of the Italian immigrants, for instance, went back to Italy between 1898 and 1930), the pronounced cyclical crises of the unbalanced Brazilian industrial sector (and the economy as a whole), and repression.

The anarchist press, and the debate over syndicalism

Anarchist ideas penetrated Brazil by several means. Books, pamphlets and newspapers arrived by ship from Europe in ports like Rio de Janeiro, or Santos in São Paulo state, and from there

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[24] See Maram.

[25] The opposite occurred in the cross-class artistic and recreational associations of immigrants, since some had statutes that prohibited black membership.

circulated across the country, eventually reaching the small towns. Anarchist literature passed freely from country to country, and works like those of the Russian anarchists Mikhail Bakunin and Piotr Kropotkin, and the Italian Errico Malatesta, into many languages, making possible a great exchange of ideas and propaganda. Kropotkin and Malatesta had great influence among the anarchists in Brazil of the First Republic, as did French anarchists like Elisée Reclus, Sebastian Faure and Jean Grave.

Above all, the circulation of libertarian practices and ideas was due—as already indicated— to the great circulation of experiences by the men and women who migrated. In 1892, a group of Italian anarchists founded in São Paulo the first libertarian newspaper in the country, *Gli Schiavi Bianchi* ("The White Slaves"). The editor of the newspaper was the Italian Galileo Botti, the owner of a coffee bar in the city of São Paulo who had arrived in Brazil two years earlier, after migrating first to Argentina.[26] The name of the newspaper was a clear reference to the hard living conditions of the thousands of immigrant workers in Brazil, particularly in the coffee plantations of São Paulo. The founding of the newspaper was followed by the May Day demonstrations that year, organised by the anarchist group.[27]

This was the start of a long history of struggles, violence and repression. The police soon began to pursue the propagandists, and a bomb found in the city (the origin of which was never verified) led to all the militants (around eighteen) being jailed for nine months, without trial. Many arbitrary imprisonments happened in São Paulo in 1898 on the occasions of May Day and the November commemorations of the Martyrs of Chicago. That year, the first anarchist militant was killed in Brazil during a demonstration: the Italian Polinice Mattei. From that period the First of May became a day of workers' protest in Brazil as well.[28]

From the late 19th century to the beginning of the 20th, a series of other newspapers in Italian were published in São Paulo by anarchist groups, among them *La Bestia Umana* ("The Human Beast"), *L'Avvenire* ("The Future"), *Il Risveglio* ("The Awakening"), *La Nuova Gente* ("The New People"), and *La Battaglia* ("The Battle"). Newspapers in Portuguese (if frequently written by Italians) included *Germinal*, *O Amigo do Povo* ("The People's Friend"), *A Terra Livre* ("The Free Land", which also drew in Portuguese, Brazilian and Spanish anarchists), among others.

The first São Paulo anarchist newspaper in Portuguese that was published regularly was *O Amigo do Povo*, founded in 1902. It was sold on the city streets, and also distributed for free. It was maintained by "comrades and sympathisers", with signatures and subscriptions.[29] Many militants wrote for it, including the Brazilian lawyer Mota, the Italians Alessandro Cerchiai, Oreste Ristori, Giulio Sorelli, Tobia Boni, Angelo Bandoni, Luigi "Gigi" Damiani and Augusto Donati, and the Portuguese lawyer Neno Vasco (of whom more below), and the Spaniard Juan Bautista Perez.[30] It had collaborators in Rio de Janeiro, including Motta Assumpção, Manuel Moscoso, Matilde and

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[26] Luigi Biondi, "La stampa anarchica italiana in Brasile: 1904–1915", Honours diss., Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza", 1995.

[27] Claudia Feierabend Baêta Leal, "Pensiero e Dinamite—Anarquismo e repressão em São Paulo nos anos 1890", Ph.D. diss., IFCH, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2006.

[28] Benjamim Mota, "Notas para a História—Violências Policiais contra o Proletariado—Ontem e Hoje", *A Plebe*, May 31 1919, 3–4, in Pinheiro and Hall, 23–4.

[29] About this newspaper see Edilene Toledo, "*O Amigo do Povo*: grupos de afinidade e a propanda anarquista em São Paulo no início do século XX", MA diss., IFCH, Unicamp, 1992.

[30] Carlo Romani, *Oreste Ristori: uma aventura anarquista*, São Paulo: Annablume, Fapesp, 2002; Edilene Toledo, *Anarquismo e Sindicalismo Revolucionário. Trabalhadores e militantes em São Paulo na Primeira República*, São Paulo: Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo, 2004.

Luigi Magrassi (mother and son), Elísio de Carvalho and Fábio Luz, and was distributed in some coffee and corner shops in that city.

In creating newspapers, the anarchists in Brazil followed the habitual steps of militants elsewhere: creating alternative information in the face of the mainstream press, and often, in direct opposition to it. The anarchist newspapers served, however, not only as propaganda vehicles, but as served mobilizing and coordinating centres for the various groups at the local, state and sometimes even the national levels.

In 1904, Ristori established *La Battaglia*, later called *La Barricata* ("The Barricade"), which had a large circulation in São Paulo of 5,000 copies per week—a considerable figure not only for an anarchist newspaper, but for any newspaper in the Brazil of the time.[31] This newspaper helped worked as a coordinating centre for the vast São Paulo anarchist world, and the great majority of militant libertarians—not only the Italians—were influenced by its positions. It drew on the support of a network of anarchist groups in the principal São Paulo urban centres. Publication was interrupted in 1912, but the same editorial group (with some defections) continued the work with the weekly newspapers *La Propaganda Libertaria*, followed by *A Guerra Sociale* ("Social War"), until 1917.

The debate on syndicalism

In Brazil, as elsewhere, anarchists had a variety of orientations. The issue that led to the most intense conflict was whether to work within the unions—and, if so, for what purpose. Starting in the first years of the 20th century, the key conflict was thus over revolutionary syndicalism. The core of syndicalism, as doctrine and practice, was the view that unions were the necessary (some even said sufficient) workers' organisation not only for immediate gains but for the revolutionary transformation of society via "one big union".[32] Syndicalism spread internationally from the 1890s, inspiring important bodies like the French General Confederation of Labour (CGT) in France, and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the United States. In every country, syndicalism developed in response to specific circumstances. In Italy and Argentina, for instance, it emerged above all as a rejection of the socialists, while in France and Brazil it arose as a union practice that could unify a range of militants.

One anarchist position on syndicalism was identified with *La Battaglia*'s editor, Ristori. This was critical of unions of all types, even syndicalist unions, considering them hopelessly reformist, mired in immediate material concerns. By contrast, a second approach, centred on *A Terra Livre* and *Germinal* and identified with Cerchiai, viewed the unions as perhaps the most important space for anarchist propaganda—but stopped short of embracing syndicalism. This was influenced by Malatesta, who argued that anarchists must strive for a social transformation that achieved "the full development of material, moral and intellectual freedom, not for the isolated individual, not for members of some class or a certain party, but for all human beings".[33] Since

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[31] Luigi Biondi, "La stampa anarchica italiana".

[32] Fascism presented itself as heir to the revolutionary syndicalist tradition when created its corporatist project. This issue is quite complex, especially if we consider the disconcerting movement of several revolutionary syndicalists to the fascists. It is clear, however, that the fascism exploited the ideas of syndicalism, transforming them in something very different from the original. See Edilene Toledo, *Travessias Revolucionárias: idéias e militantes sindicalistas em São Paulo e na Itália (1890–1945)*, Campinas, SP: Editora da Unicamp, 2004.

[33] Errico Malatesta, "Programa Anarquista", 1903, online at http://www.ainfos. ca/03/aug/ainfos00406.html, ac-

this could not be imposed by force, it had to arise from "the enlightened conscience of each" person "the free consent of all". It followed that the first task should "be to persuade people".

The "Malatestian" current argued that union struggles conscientised workers about the repressive conditions under which they lived and the conflict between their needs and those of the employers, and trained workers in collective struggle and solidarity. However, it rejected the view, held by many syndicalists, that unions should be politically neutral on the grounds that workers should unite, first and foremost, as workers, leaving national, political, religious and other differences outside.

One problem was, said Malatesta, that "there is no clear division, absolute, between individuals or between classes", and besides, there were infinite gradations of material conditions within classes. If classes were not homogenous, then it was an illusion to build a movement on economic solidarity rather than moral solidarity. Anarchism was not about the struggle of one class only—it thought in terms of the broad masses of poor and exploited people, and not only the industrial proletariat. Class struggle (in Marxist terms) was seen by the anarchists as one part—an important part, but only a part—of a larger human struggle between the exploited of all types and the exploiters, of all types. The Church and the State played as central a role here as the bourgeoisie, not just a super-structural one.[34] These anarchists also therefore tended to reject the syndicalist thesis of the revolutionary union as the embryo of the new society.

Thus, the "Malatestian" anarchists defended the need for strictly anarchist organisations that could struggle inside as much as outside, the unions in order to achieve anarchism through individual conversions.[35] Besides the points above, this was because of the perceived limitations of unionism: as movements based on immediate, material interests, open as well to all workers—even those uninterested in political ideas and radical struggles—unions tended to degenerate into moderate reformism, dissipating energies and extending capitalism's life. Damiani expressed this position very well, in our view:[36]

> In the union there's room for everybody: who pays the dues and strikes when ordered, is always a good fellow, no matter if he is a nationalist or Catholic. In the union, the idealistic propaganda is an offence, a violation of the rights of the stomach, and the freedom of those that couldn't care less about the abolition of the State

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cessed 10 October 2007.

[34] This idea is present in most anarchist thinkers, including Bakunin and Malatesta, and was shared by their followers, explaining anarchism's historical record of attracting many adherents in countries where peasants and craftsmen constituted the great majority of workers even in the industrial era, such as Italy, Spain and Russia.

[35] Besides spreading the anarchist idea amongst workers, and denouncing exploitation in the plantations and the factories, they also spoke to the whole of society, since they wanted to ultimately transform all of humanity. From 1905–1906, for instance, the poet Ricardo Gonçalves was able to promote anarchism in the columns of the *O Comércio de São Paulo*, bringing previously unheard opinions and critiques of the daily struggle for survival to the readers of the conventional press: Antonio Arnoni Prado, "O Cenário para um Retrato: Ricardo Gonçalves", in Antonio Arnoni Prado (ed.), *Libertários no Brasil*, São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1986.

[36] Luigi Damiani, "Deviazioni e specializzazioni", *La Barricata*, November 17, 1912, 2. Damiani was probably the most influential anarchist in São Paulo—and perhaps in all Brazil. He was born in Rome, and embraced anarchism when very young. When he went to Brazil in 1897 he had already known prison, and had associated with many other anarchist militants. He worked as a painter, ran several newspapers and collaborated with other militants, always defending the idea that the anarchists should use the unions as a space for libertarian propaganda. In 1919, he was expelled to Italy. See Luigi Biondi, "Na Construção de uma Biografia Anarquista: os Últimos Anos de Gigi Damiani no Brasil", in Rafael Borges Deminicis and Daniel Aarão Reis Filho (eds.), *Historia do Anarquismo no Brasil*, vol. 1, Niterói/

and of capitalist property. Everything that doesn't refer to eight hours and to ten cents increases is rejected.

Thus, the anarchists should enter the unions primarily to disseminate anarchist principles amongst the workers, not to seek daily material conquests; at the same time, they should join general strikes mainly in order to transform them into armed insurrections—possibly the first step to revolution. This was very different to revolutionary syndicalism, which combined a revolutionary perspective with day-by-day struggles for better wages, working hours and living conditions, using with partial as well as general strikes.

Finally, a third anarchist current adopted revolutionary syndicalism in practice, without worrying overly about doctrinal coherence. The distance between the anarchist vision of an alternative social order, negating the ideas, values and institutions of the bourgeois world of the oligarchical republic, and the Brazilian reality, led these anarchists to not only join the unions, but to actively embrace syndicalism. Syndicalism linked immediate daily struggles for improvements through partial changes in the existing framework with a long-term perspective of broader social transformation into a new socialist society based on organised labour, not on communities or parties. These anarchists argued that the revolution was not so close that anarchists could ignore immediate struggles to ameliorate the workers' lives, and therefore rejected the notion that strikes should be used only as exercises in revolutionary struggle.

Giulio Sorelli was a prime example of this current.[37] An anarchist carpenter, he helped found the syndicalist FOSP in 1905, serving as its president for many years. He wrote in *O Amigo do Povo*—responding to the "Malatestians" of *Germinal*—that the "labour union was without doubt one of the weapon that, with effectiveness, could be used by the workers so as to attain self-emancipation".[38] Some of the prosyndicalist anarchists also argued that that revolutionary syndicalism was really part of the great anarchist ideological family, and that 20th century anarchism should identify with syndicalism, or at least with an "anarchist conception of the syndicalism", as Neno Vasco wrote in a famous work.[39] (Until the start of the 1920s, however, the term "anarcho-syndicalism" that this suggested did not appear in the São Paulo anarchist press, although it would become common subsequently).

These debates dominated the anarchist "community" and the labour movement in São Paulo from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1920s, as well as in Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Recife and Porto Alegre. Anarchists, syndicalists and socialists from across Brazil were present at the first Brazilian Labour Congress, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1906. This was the first great attempt to form "one big union", and the anarchists participated thoroughly in the debates. However, revolutionary syndicalism was the key influence at the congress, since it prevailed in the São Paulo labour organisations, and greatly influenced those of Rio de Janeiro.

Rio de Janeiro: EdUFF/ Mauad, 2006.

[37] Sorelli was born in 1877 and arrived in São Paulo in 1892. His conversion to anarchism took effect about 1902–3 (after a brief association with Italian socialists in 1901), following an internal conflict in an Italian mutual aid society, the *Fratellanza Italiana* ("Italian brotherhood") between monarchists and radical republicans, during which he was expelled as an "anarcho-terrorist". Sorelli concluded that ethnic origin could never supersede political and class identities. Italian republican craftsmen could not be in the same labour societies as monarchists, but even republican mutual aid could never provide the organisational nucleus of the class struggle.

[38] *O Amigo do Povo*, São Paulo, no. 8, 19 July, 1902.

[39] Neno Vasco, *Concepção anarquista do sindicalismo*, Porto: Afrontamento, 1984.

The very first theme discussed was the political neutrality of the workers' resistance bodies and unions. This was approved, in the participants' own words, because "the working class was extremely divided by its political and religious opinions; that the only solid base of agreement and of action that exist are the economic interests common to the whole working class".[40] Thus, the congress decided "to put out of the union the rivalries that would result from the adoption, by the resistance associations, of a political or religious doctrine".[41] The COB created at that meeting only admitted unions whose essential base was "economic" resistance. Still, it did not adopt classical pragmatic trade-unionism, because it stressed the revolutionary union and the general strike as important parts of its programme.[42] The Second Labour Congress of 1913, also held in the capital, Rio de Janeiro, reaffirmed the principles of the revolutionary syndicalism when it revived the COB.

It is not, then, strictly accurate to call the labour movement in São Paulo at this time "anarchist", or to conflate anarchism and syndicalism. Workers' militancy was influenced by a number of factors and currents, of which anarchism was only one. An analysis of the principal union resolutions, newspapers and documents makes it evident that the unions were often revolutionary syndicalist rather than anarchist, although the constant union presence of anarchists has tended to confuse matters. Many union activists and leaders—leaving aside the majority of ordinary members—did not call themselves anarchists, or perhaps only identified with one or more anarchist principles like direct action, the general strike, and rejection of political parties and elections.

Besides the predominant syndicalist influence, socialism was also a factor in the unions. Recent studies have shown that the socialist groups in São Paulo, explicitly linked to the Italian Socialist Party, were more active and important during the First Republic than has previously been supposed. The São Paulo state labour movement brought together anarchists, syndicalists, socialists and radical republicans in newspapers, demonstrations and conferences, in various groups, leagues, unions, cooperatives, in union federations, and in strikes and other initiatives. Mutual aid societies also remained an important form of worker organisation.

The lack of a party organisation that demanded ideological uniformity favoured heterogeneity amongst the anarchists. In the Brazilian experience, moreover, the libertarian press had a loose approach to doctrinal coherence, and to considerations of the general theoretical implications of private statements. But despite the heterogeneity of opinions among the anarchists, there was a definite unanimity on certain points, which united anarchists all over the world: the need for the abolition of the State, the rejection of electoral and parliamentary tactics, opposition to centralized organisation, the defence of the direct action, and the value placed upon individuality.

Anarchist and syndicalist activities in São Paulo

Although anarchists were not the only influences on the workers, the libertarians were clearly present in key areas and moments in workers' history in Brazil. Even today, it is difficult to quantify exactly the degree of anarchist penetration among the workers in São Paulo, but there

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[40] Resoluções do Primerio Congresso Operário Brasileiro ("Resolutions of the First Brazilian Labour Congress"), in Pinheiro and Hall, 46–47.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 49.

was definitely diffuse sympathy for one or another aspect of anarchism. If conscious anarchists were a minority among the workers, they were quite visible—so much so that for a long time the adjective "anarchist" was synonymous with "subversive", as would later be the case with "communist". The state and the proprietors feared their actions and the effects of their propaganda enough to repress them with imprisonment and deportations, and to cooperated closely with one another to suppress direct actions promoted by anarchists and others—this, of course, happened not only in Brazil, but across the world.

It is important to highlight, again, that anarchist, revolutionary syndicalist and socialist ideas, in São Paulo in the first decades of the 20th century, were not simply alien political ideologies. These were not ideas out of place, as some historians have suggested: the workers used the language, the ideas and the practices of these movements in order to engage with their concrete problems and concerns. In the Brazilian context of the end 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, the state was experienced by the working class almost entirely as a source of oppression. The anarchist (and syndicalist) view that it was a source of oppression, obnoxious and unnecessary, and that voluntary social organisation provided a viable alternative—where free experimentation, freedom, solidarity and fraternity would prevail—had considerable attraction.

During the First Republic, workers in Brazil faced enormous difficulties in using institutional politics to conquer, or guarantee, rights and improvements. The Republic, with its political exclusion of wide sections of the population, provided an incentive to adopt anarchism, a fertile field for the growth of anarchist ideas. Many workers demonstrated receptivity to the ideas and practices that could contribute to the improvement of their daily life, and that also appeared to lead to future emancipation. Besides, the limited reforms obtained by reformist socialism in other countries disappointed a section of the workers.

This state of mind was radicalized by the anarchist rejection of the whole political process through the supposedly democratic mechanisms of liberal states. The anarchists considered participation of the oppressed in institutional politics to be unimportant, and proposed other forms of agency. They constantly denounced the class-based character of the Brazilian republic, and the fraudulent character of every official electoral process.[43]

Anarchists and syndicalists condemned the Brazilian oligarchy, which ruled the country through its monopoly of economic wealth and political influence, in the strongest terms. They considered it a parasite that obstructed the flourishing of a civilized life. Unsurprisingly, the industrialists were especially criticised—whether Brazilian or foreign. In São Paulo, many entrepreneurs were from Italy, and therefore often called for 'national loyalty' during strikes and other movements, but this had little impact on the thousands of Italian immigrant workers.

The spread of anarchism in São Paulo was, as we have already suggested, strongly favoured by migration. The anarchist emphasis on the masses certainly had resonance among the workers in São Paulo, and contributed greatly to the spread of anarchism and syndicalism. A number of scholars have explained the strength of anarchism here as linked to the migrant character of the workforce, which was drawn to the anarchist view that all workers were part of a universal class waging an international struggle against exploitation.

Many immigrants carried anarchist ideas, especially Italians from the northern and central regions, influenced by the doctrines of Bakunin and Malatesta. A number of immigrant workers were veterans of struggles in their home countries, including in their number militants fleeing

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[43] After the Republic was established, state power was nominally subject to electoral control. However, vote-

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repression. There was continual communication amongst the anarchists internationally because a revolutionary's life frequently forced her or him into exile temporarily, or even permanently. Malatesta, for instance, was active not only in Italy but also in France, England, Spain, the United States and Argentina, while Luigi Fabbri, another leading Italian anarchist, died in Uruguay.

Many important anarchists went to Brazil as exiles. Gregório de Vasconcelos—better known as Neno Vasco—was a Portuguese lawyer who was already a convinced anarchist when he arrived in Brazil in 1900. He played an important role in the São Paulo labour movement until his return to Portugal in 1911, where he became the principal propagandist for Malatesta's ideas, and continued to send articles to Brazil. The Italian Ristori came to Brazil with a reputation an important anarchist, after several adventures across the world. The shoemaker Antonio Martinez, the first victim of the São Paulo police during the 1917 general strike in São Paulo city—the most intense and wide-reaching strike in Brazil until the twenties—was a young Spanish anarchist.

So, anarchist groups in Brazil had continual opportunities to host foreign militants, and hear their opinions, creating ties of friendship and shared experiences. Anarchism was, therefore, not just international in theory, but very much international in practice as well. The circulation of people and ideas characterised this period of history, and this was true not just of the anarchists, but of the labour movement, and other left-wing groups, as well.

The key anarchist organisation was the propaganda group. In fact, the foundation of anarchist political life in Brazil was voluntary cooperation among various small groups, spontaneously constituted, without a fixed structure. The sources indicate that these groups were composed, above all, by manual workers: typographers, garbage men, shoemakers, workers at brickworks, bricklayers, carpenters, hatters, railway workers, and skilled factory workers.

The propaganda groups acted as discussion centres, but some specialised in concrete activities, including among other things, the creation of schools, the publication of books and pamphlets, correspondence with the anarchist and labour press in other countries, the production of newspapers, theatrical activities, and the organisation of conferences, debates, picnics, and propaganda tours. Frequently, the same militant participated in several groups.

These groups' propaganda was typically anti-electoral, anti-militarist, anti-clerical, and anti-bourgeois, and it campaigned in favour of arrested militants. They also organised numerous demonstrations against war and obligatory military service, and in support of the Russian workers revolt of 1905, the Mexicans' rising in 1910, and the Russians, again, in 1917; they commemorated the Martyrs of Chicago through May Day. In 1927, anarchists in Brazil organised countless solidarity demonstrations for the Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who had received the death sentence in the United States.

As in other parts of the world, anarchists in Brazil in that period believed strongly in education as an essential means of creating a new person that could build a new world. Thus, they believed it was necessary to build a new morality, an anarchist morality, opposed to bourgeois morality, and an anarchist culture in the broadest sense, opposed to the culture of the capitalist world the anarchists wanted to destroy. Essential to this project was the creation of Modern (or Rationalist) Schools, inspired above all in Francesco Ferrer i Guàrdia's pedagogy. These operated in São Paulo

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rigging was the general practice, taking place in all phases of the electoral process. In addition, elections in the first four decades of the Republic were characterized by low levels of participation. Only the 1930 presidential election saw more than 5 percent of the population go to the polls. Registration and voting were not compulsory, and besides, women and the illiterate were excluded: even in 1930 these groups represented 60 percent of the population. See Jairo Nicolau, *História do voto no Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Ed., 2002.

from 1902 until 1919, when they were closed by the police in the repression that followed the great struggles of 1917–1919.

The effort to create a new culture, and promote the vision of a new world, was also manifested in the production what was termed "useful literature": novels and stories containing anarchist propaganda (often published in chapters in the pages of newspapers), as well as libertarian plays (run in little workers theatres in São Paulo city). One of the most popular plays was *Il Giutiziere*, written by Sorelli. It was an apologia for Gaetano Bresci, the anarchist who assassinated the King of Italy in 1900 in retaliation for the bloody repression of protests against famine and rising prices in 1898.

The labour movement was another important area of anarchist activity. In São Paulo the anarchists operated in the unions, which were largely evolutionary syndicalist in orientation. Very often, the anarchists' entrance into the unions more a tactical than a doctrinal issue: the union was one more place (even if for some, a privileged place) to diffuse the anarchist idea; there were also tactical considerations like halting the progress of rival political tendencies in the unions; prosyndicalist anarchists saw the unions, however, as the most important area of anarchist activity. For a number of anarchists, the results of participation were somewhat disappointing:[44]

> The labour associations proceed with the methods suggested by practice. To claim that our unions correspond to libertarians theories is madness, because the membership that composes these associations are attached to quite different ideas and methods.

Likewise:[45]

> The most intelligent workers, usually, are anarchists. But the great majority of the workers think only of saving money to face strikes.

After his expulsion in 1919, Damiani wrote that the Brazilian unions never really had "a program that could be tolerated or accepted by anarchists".[46]

Anarchist and syndicalist involvement in the great São Paulo strikes

Anarchist groups played an important role in the key the workers' struggles of the First Republic, such as the campaign for the eight-hour day, and the struggles of 1912–1913 and 1917–19. They participated above all through their newspapers, but also through meetings, demonstrations, and strike action.

The year 1907 was characterised by countless strikes in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santos and Recife against the very long workday to which workers of many categories—employed in both big and small workplaces—were subject. The wave of demands for the eight-hour day was largely due to a call by the national labour congress of 1906. These strikes were launched by meetings of

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[44] *Il Libertario* ("The Libertarian"), 1 December, 1906, 1–2.

[45] M.V., "Brésil", *Bulletin de Internationale Anarchiste*, vol. 1, n. 4, 1 May 1908, 3–4 in Pinheiro and Hall, 108.

[46] Luigi Damiani, "Il movimento sindacalista nel Brasil" in *I paesi nei quali non si deve emigrare. La questione*

the workers' associations, aided by the labour federations, but were supported by many anarchist and syndicalist militants, as well as socialist.

The struggle for the eight-hour day grew in scope. The São Paulo workers who built vehicles initiated the transformation of the movement into a general strike. Their struggle lasted about a month, and their victory was sanctioned at a meeting of the employers and the workers, in which Sorelli, the anarchist and syndicalist leader of the FOSP, was central. After that, the general strike spread across all trades, being notably strong amongst the bricklayers, stonemasons, painters, marble workers, plumbers, typographers, hat makers, metal workers, textile workers, carpenters, and the workers of the pasta mills.

Almost every sector held their meetings at the FOSP headquarters.[47] Many workers won the eight hours working-day, although others only secured a small reduction of the lengthy work day.

The repression against the FOSP was brutal. Armed policemen invaded its offices, and arrested Sorelli (who was jailed for thirteen days), and more than twenty others. Furniture, and books from the FOSP library, were also seized, and not returned despite countless appeals to the police, which also requested the right of assembly. Such repression certainly affected the movement. Nonetheless, a new executive committee was formed, which began meeting privately in friends' houses; the strikers meanwhile held their meetings in the forests surrounding the city, and in parks.[48]

Many of the strikers were not, of course, anarchists. However, the police attributed all the workers' actions to the activities of a few anarchist leaders—or those defined as such by the police for their own purposes. This promoted the equation anarchism=terrorism, which was very pervasive during the first decades of the 20th century, and justified the repression that took place against the strike leaders—not all of whom were anarchists. Following the strikes, the deportation of 132 foreign workers was ordered.[49]

The great strikes of the period 1917–1919 were the result of the workers' own organisation and mobilisation, but relied on the participation of many anarchist, syndicalist and socialist leaders and militants, most of whom had labour movement experience in Italy. The movement in 1917 started with crowds coming out into the streets to protest, and raise demands. Demonstrations against the high cost of living, women's and children working conditions, and the many problems that afflicted the workers' life, took place almost daily.

The workers' claims, as voiced by the Proletarian Defence Committee in São Paulo, were the eight-hour day and a working week of five-and-a-half days, the abolition of child labour, restrictions on the employment of women and youths, safety at work, the punctual payment of wages, wage increases, reductions in the price of rent and basic consumer goods, the right to unionise, and the release of arrested workers and reemployment of dismissed strikers.[50] These demands required action from the state as much as from the employers.

While the strike movement was driven by the unions, as well as by spontaneous working class action, the socialists, anarchists, and above all, syndicalists, played a leading role. The prin-

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sociale nel Brasile, Milano: Edizioni Umanità Nova, 1920, 31–36.

[47] Repatriation Trial of Giulio Sorelli. Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (ANRJ), Ministério da Justiça, IJJ7, nr. 179.

[48] The strikes and repression were described thoroughly by the socialist newspaper *Avanti!* See, especially, *Avanti!* May 15, 1907, 1; May 16, 1907, 1; "Agli operai, ai compagni, agli amici" *Avanti!* May 27, 1907, 2.

[49] "Federação Operária de São Paulo. Aos Trabalhadores", *Avanti!* May 24, 1907.

[50] Maram, 133.

cipal speakers at demonstrations and meetings during the strikes were two Italian socialists, Teodoro Monicelli and Giuseppe Sgai, labour movement veterans in both Italy and Brazil, and two anarchists, Leuenroth and Antônio Candeias Duarte. The revolutionary syndicalists, however, prevailed in the union leadership. The anarchists were deeply involved, actively aiding the workers, and participating in negotiations with the employers and the government through the Proletarian Defence Committee, along with socialist leaders and several journalists.[51]

In São Paulo, anarchist groups and newspapers, such as *A Plebe* ("The Plebeians", edited by Leuenroth) and *A Guerra Sociale* (edited by Damiani and Cerchiai), were involved in the strikes and demonstrations. Some of the labour groups in São Paulo held their meetings at the headquarters of the *Centro Libertário*, the main anarchist club. Most of the organised workers preferred to meet at neighbourhood union offices, or at socialist venues like the International Socialist Centre, which drew in many FOSP syndicalists.[52]

There were confrontations and clashes between strikers and the police and the *Força Pública*—the armed forces of São Paulo state- which extended over several weeks and produced many deaths. The repression of the demonstrations was brutal: the prisons filled with workers, allegedly or genuinely anarchists, labour organisations were forbidden from operating, homes were invaded, and meetings were violently dispersed. The Brazilian state and the capitalists saw repression, rather than reform, as the solution to the social question. The efforts of the public authorities were focussed on pressurising the growing labour movement: there were innumerable arrests, many foreigners, including anarchists and socialists were deported, and a great deal of state violence, particularly in São Paulo, where perhaps two hundred workers were killed, according to some contemporary sources.[53]

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[51] On this strike see the different interpretations of Joel Wolfe, "Anarchist Ideology, Worker Practice: the 1917 General Strike and the Formation of São Paulo's Working Class", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 71: 4, 1991, 809–846; Christina Roquette Lopreato, "O Espírito da Revolta. A Greve Geral Anarquista de 1917", Ph.D. diss., IFCH, Unicamp, Campinas, 1996 (republished in 1997 as *A semana trágica: a greve geral de 1917*, São Paulo: Museu da Imigração); Luigi Biondi, "Entre associações étnicas e de classe. Os processos de organisação política e sindical dos trabalhadores italianos na cidade de São Paulo (1890–1920)", Ph.D. diss., IFCH, Unicamp, 2002.

[52] Usually known by its Italian name *Centro Socialista Internazionale*, for most members were Italian immigrants. See Luigi Biondi, "A greve geral de 1917: considerações sobre o seu desenvolvimento", in Biondi, "Entre associações étnicas e de classe", 279–294.

[53] According to an investigation by the Italian newspaper *Fanfulla* of São Paulo, July 1917.

Fig. 10. A crowd scene from the 1917 general strike in São Paulo city, Brazil.

Despite this situation, the struggle continued, mobilizing workers on an unprecedented scale, peaking in July 1917, with general strikes in the key cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In São Paulo, the Proletarian Defence Committee managed to reach a relatively favourable settlement, with a similar settlement reached in Rio a bit later, although the FORJ was dissolved by the authorities. In October 1917, Brazil entered World War I, providing a pretext for further repression of the anarchists and the labour movement. However, prices continued to increase, older organisations sometimes emerged under new names (like the General Union of Labour, or UGT, which succeeded the FORJ), and strikes and mutinies broke out again in 1918. Soon after the war ended on the 11th November 1918, there was an insurrectionary strike in Rio de Janeiro state: this involved an (unsuccessful) anarchist plan to seize government buildings and arms, split the army, and set up a *soviet* republic, which was met with heavy repression, including the dissolution of the UGT.

In 1919, the labour movement in Brazil—and primarily, in São Paulo—entered its most intense phase, with an enormous wave of strikes. Many of the demands were the same as those of 1917, and the general characteristics of the strike movement were similar. Union power had grown due to the struggles of the previous years. Even the ferocious repression of the movement, starting from 1917 and going into the 1920s, failed to stop the workers organising in leagues, unions and political groups.

While there were other important demonstrations and rebellions during the First Republic, the greatest strikes were those of 1917–1919,[54] and many scholars consider the strikes of 1919 as closing an era in the history of labour. Many factors account for the high levels of workers' struggle in this period: worsening living and working conditions due to the effects of World War I, the propaganda of anarchists, syndicalists and socialists, concrete efforts to organise the working class through unions and union federations, and the revolutionary era marked by the Russian Revolution and the uprisings across Europe.

While anarchist and syndicalist influence continued throughout the first half of the 1920s, the second half of the decade saw the start of decline in Brazil. That was partly due to increasing debates in the labour movement over the rise of the Soviet Union, and a growing division between anarchists and communists split the unions.

A number of anarchists, including some leading figures, broke with libertarian conceptions: the official Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) was founded in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, by former anarchists. Censorship and repression also played an important role. The propaganda of the anarchists, and the left in general, suffered a severe blow with a new law controlling the press promulgated in 1921. The law sought to restrict subversive propaganda, whether written or verbal.[55] In 1924, a wave of repression swept over the labour movement, and a number of militants, including anarchists, were sent to the concentration camp of Clevelândia in the terrible northern equatorial region of Oiapoque, where many would die in the years that followed.

However, in spite of the rise of communism, state repression and increasing state control of society, revolutionary syndicalism—supported by a section of the anarchists—continued playing

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[54] Pinheiro and Hall, 238.

[55] Decreto nr. 4269, January 17, 1921, Collecção das Leis da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brasil de 1921 (vol. I—Atos do Poder Legislativo). Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1922 apud Cláudia F. Baeta Leal. Propaganda e Combate: a imprensa anarquista na Primeira República. Mimeo.

an important role in the São Paulo labour movement into the 1930s. It defended working class unity and autonomy against the repression of the last conservative governments as well as the subsequent corporatist regime of Getúlio Dornelles Vargas. In 1931, for example, a police report characterized the FOSP—still the most important union centre in São Paulo state—as syndicalist.[56] Groups properly called anarchist decreased in number and importance, as happened elsewhere in the world. In 1931, Ristori left anarchism to associate with intellectuals, artists and students linked to the PCB.[57] This decline also explains why, in 1940s São Paulo, Leuenroth—still faithful to his anarchist convictions—was sufficiently isolated to celebrate May Day with the socialists.[58]

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[56] Report of Antonio Ghioffi to Dr. Ignacio Costa Ferreira (chief constable of political police of São Paulo state), São Paulo, 10th of June 1931. Federação Operária de São Paulo (FOSP), Prontuário n. 716, vol. 2, Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, Delegacia de Ordem Política e Social (AESP, DEOPS).

[57] Romani, 267.

[58] Prado, 16.

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Final Reflections:
The vicissitudes of anarchist and syndicalist trajectories, 1940 to the present

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Since the early 1990s the world has witnessed a remarkable resurgence of anarchist and syndicalist ideology, organisation, and methods of struggle. This resurgence is generally explained as a response to the imposition of neoliberal economic policies, the impact of increasingly globalized capital, the restructuring of state-society relations, the advent of new forms of authoritarianism and social control, and the collapse of world communism.[1]

Rather than signal "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution," the post-Soviet period has been characterised by experimentation, reinvention and rediscovery on the part of progressive movements.[2] Anarchism and syndicalism have been part of this process of renewal. New movements have emerged in areas with little in the way of a revolutionary, libertarian socialist tradition; existing movements in areas of historic influence have revived, and a more diffuse anarchistic influence permeates a number of important social movements.

The last two decades have seen new anarchist groups emerge in countries as diverse as Indonesia, Nigeria and Syria. In 1997, for example, several hundred gold miners registered a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW) with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Labour—the first syndicalist movement in the country.[3] Older movements in Europe and the former Soviet bloc have experienced revitalization. In Spain, the anarcho-syndicalist General Confederation of Workers (*Confederación General de Trabajadores*, or CGT) currently represents nearly two million workers in the industrial relations system.[4] It is affiliated with the European Federation of Alternative Syndicalism (FESAL), formed in 2003, which includes a section of the Italian union movement (the COBAS, from *Comitati di Base*, or "committees of the base"), representing hun-

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[1] See, *inter alia*, Barbara Epstein, "Anarchism and the Anti-Globalisation Movement," *Monthly Review*, 53: 4, 2001, 1–14; David Graeber, "The New Anarchists," *New Left Review* (second series), 13, 2002, 61–73; Uri Gordon, "Anarchism Reloaded," *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 12:1, 2007, 29–48; Gerald Meyer, "Anarchism, Marxism and the Collapse of the Soviet Union," *Science and Society*, 67: 2, 2003, 218–221; Laibman, David. "Anarchism, Marxism, and the Cunning of Capitalism", *Science and Society*, 66: 4, 2001–2002, 421–27; Lucien van der Walt and Michael Schmidt, *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism*, San Francisco, Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009, 5–30.

[2] Frances Fukuyama, "The End of History?," *The National Interest* Summer 1989, pp. 3, 4, 12.

[3] Michael Hargis, "IWW Chronology (1996–1997)", online at http://www.iww.org/ culture/chronology/chronology11.shtml, accessed 15 November 2008.

[4] In terms of the 2004 union election process in the public and private sector, the CGT was Spain's third largest union federation: *Alternative Libertaire*, "Spain: CGT Is Now the Third Biggest Union," *Alternative Libertaire*, November 2004.

dreds of thousands of workers. A revolutionary syndicalist union summit organized in Paris, France, 2007, drew 250 delegates worldwide, with the African unions constituting the largest single continental presence.[5] The summit of the syndicalist International Workers Association (IWA, f. 1922) in Manchester, England, the same year was attended by most of the international's 16 affiliates, as well as other groups. The IWA includes the Siberian Confederation of Labour (SKT), which has a substantial presence amongst factory workers, miners and teachers.

The influence of anarchism on the international counter-globalisation movement is well-established. Self-identified anarchists played a key role in the disruption of a series of major economic summits associated with neo-liberal globalisation, most notably the 1999 World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Seattle in the United States. In the postcolonial world, anarchist influences are discernable in movements like the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, the indigenous rights and anti-privatization movements in Bolivia, and the Indian Karnataka farmers' movement.

The Zapatistas, composed mainly of ethnic Maya in Chiapas, rebelled against the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by the Mexican state in 1994. Rather than pursuing state power, the Zapatistas have sought to secure village autonomy, control over communal lands and resources, and to defend their cultural traditions.[6] In Cochabamba and El Alto, Bolivia, indigenous and workingclass movements organized mass protests in 2000 and 2003 against the privatization of water and gas. They also engaged in grassroots mobilizations to obtain access to land and community autonomy.[7] The Indian Karnataka farmers' movement (KRRS) similarly stresses independent, democratic village communities and opposition to neoliberalism and capitalism, and forms part of *La Via Campesina* (The Peasant Way), which coordinates peasant and indigenous activism in Asia, Latin America, Africa, the U.S., and Europe.[8]

A *"new anarchism"?*

The resurgent anarchist and syndicalist movement is a diverse, fractured and contested one. It ranges from classical, mass syndicalist unions like the CGT and SKT, with clear programs and permanent structures, to an experiential wing, centered on small groups that tend to eschew theory and strategy in favour of a focus on democratic practice, direct action and lifestyle experimentation.

Contemporary analysts, considering the relationship between the contemporary global anarchist and syndicalist movement, and its predecessor, examined in this volume, have acknowledged the continuities between the two. It is generally conceded that late 19th century and early

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[5] "i07: Consolidate international solidarity," http://www.cnt-f.org/spip.php?article 345, accessed 15 November 2008; "Conférences Internationales Syndicales—I07," http://www.anarkismo.net/article/5434, accessed 15 November 2008.

[6] The literature on the Zapatista movement is voluminous. For a discussion of its anarchist inspired features, See, Staughton Lynd and Andrej Grubacic, *Wobblies and Zapatistas: conversations on Anarchism, Marxism, and Radical History*, Oakland: PM Press, 2008, 3–15.

[7] For a list of studies that characterize recent indigenous and working-class movements'' struggles for local self-government, communal lands, and the abrogation of neoliberal economic policies, see, Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics*, New York: Verso Press, 2007, 25, fn. 9.

[8] Karen Goaman, "The Anarchist Travelling Circus: Reflections on Contemporary Anarchism, Anti-Capitalism and the International Scene" in Jonathan Purkis and James Bowen (eds.), *Changing anarchism: Anarchist Theory and Practice in a Global Age*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2004, 173–174. On the trope of a "New Anar-

20th century anarchism still serves to inspire, and to provide the basic principles—anti-statism, anti-capitalism, pro-direct action and pro-direct democracy—for contemporary anarchists.

However, a number of writers have gone further, to suggest the current period is characterised by a "New Anarchism" that differs significantly from the historic movement. Jonathan Purkis, James Bowen, and Dave Morland claim the "new" anarchism is associated with new "critiques of power" along the lines, *inter alia*, of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ecology, and technology.[9] They also stress "lifestyle anarchism" and the "politics of consumption" as essentially new concerns. In short, the new global anarchism is distinguished by its "complexity."[10] Barbara Epstein speaks of contemporary anarchism as "as an anarchist sensibility than as anarchism *per se*", "a politics decidedly in the moment" marked by "intellectual fuzziness" and a broad anti-authoritarianism.[11] "Unlike the Marxist radicals of the sixties, who devoured the writings of Lenin and Mao, today's anarchist activists are unlikely to pore over the works of Bakunin".[12]

Recuperation: the richness of classical anarchism and syndicalism

The contrast established in these works seems overdrawn. At one level, arguments for the emergence of a "New Anarchism" tend to rest on generalisations derived from a focus on the experiential wing of the contemporary movement—only one part of a complicated and contradictory movement and one, moreover, largely evident in the West. The argument that, for instance, "today's anarchist activists" largely ignore anarchist theory and history certainly does not hold for the movement as a whole; it reflects only one of many trends and by no means the predominant one.

At another level, it is difficult to agree that contemporary anarchist "critiques of power" are either "new" or a sign of a growing "complexity" in anarchist sensibilities. Granted late 20th century and early 21st century global capitalism, state apparatuses, and social and cultural formations are decidedly more complex, imbricated, and more mutable than in the early 20th century.

Yet the historic anarchist and syndicalist movements in the colonial and postcolonial world examined in this volume, self-consciously and systematically addressed both matters of production and social reproduction. In addition, they also took up issues pertaining to consumption, including access to, and the costs of, basic necessities and environmental issues, manifest in celebrations of nature and struggles against pollution. They also contested the dominant culture through the elaboration of a multifaceted counter-cultural project. Race, ethnic, and gender equality were central to their emancipatory project, as clearly reflected in the South African, Peruvian, Brazilian, Egyptian, and Cuban cases.

Another apparent point of divergence, according to those who suggest a break between historical and "New" anarchism, is the method of struggle adopted by the new anarchist movements and global networks. Direct action at the point of production linked to the "old" anarchism and syndicalism is said to have given way to symbolic opposition, civil disobedience and non-violent

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chism" versus the classical anarchist and syndicalist movement, besides Graeber, 61–73, see Ruth Kinna, *Anarchism: A Beginner's Guide*, Oxford, UK: Oneworldpublications, 2005.

[9] For Purkis and Bowen the cumulative effect of these critiques amounts to a "paradigm shift" in the anarchist model. See Purkis and Bowen, 5 and 7.

[10] Purkis and Bowen, 15.

[11] Epstein, 1, 11.

[12] Ibid., 1.

protests aimed at ridiculing "the conventions of bureaucracy and repressive society," disrupting the routine of capital, and temporarily reclaiming space.[13] Such "carnivals" of struggle are, such analysts suggest, expressions of a new approach to solidarity work, resting upon the activation of loose global networks that enable the circulation of ideas and models across borders.

Were these tactics absent from repertoire of struggles of early global anarchism? Here again, evidence from the colonial and post-colonial world would suggest otherwise. Symbolically contesting and mocking the legitimacy and moral authority of state officials, the bourgeoisie, the Church, and established social conventions were not uncommon. Ritual celebrations and festive events with international and local content such as May Day, and tributes to local martyrs, unions, and popular culture were standard fare. These grassroots level practices and performances often entailed the appropriation of public and urban spaces. This was particularly true in the case of non-violent street demonstrations and mass protests in the main squares and central plazas of national capitals and urban centers. The underserved reputation of late 19th and early 20th century anarchism and syndicalism for violence has obscured the largely pacific (if forceful) character of the direct action it propounded.

David Graeber, in a seminal article on "The New Anarchists," claims that organisational models and resistance techniques developed in the postcolonial world are profoundly shaping contemporary western movements, in marked contrast to the converse flow of influence during the initial era of anarchist internationalism.[14]

This is not a fair historical judgment of the classical anarchist and syndicalist movements in the colonial and postcolonial world. Although more research is needed, studies point to a more complex, multidirectional and multivocal explanation for the early development of anarchism in the global North.[15] Similarly, the papers in this volume effectively refute the notion of a simple adoption of a western anarchist blueprint. Indeed, they demonstrate the ingenuity of anarchists and syndicalists in fashioning distinctive, polymorphist organisations and repertoires of struggle to fit the colonial and post-colonial contexts.

Foundations: the past in the present

In several key respects, classical anarchism and syndicalism provides the foundation for current global anarchist and syndicalist activism. First and foremost, as the studies in this volume demonstrate, anarchists and syndicalists in the colonial and post-colonial world selfconsciously established transnational and cross-continental networks. These networks were based on formal and informal connections involving labour unions, study groups, newspapers, migrant communities, and personal relationships. Second, by formulating and promoting a universal discourse that was anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-statist, pro-human dignity and liberty, these anarchists and syndicalists consciously and effectively fostered an internationalist sensibility and outlook.

A third contribution to the contemporary movement was the classical movement's universalism. Opposed not only to economic exploitation but to all forms of oppression, classical anarchism and syndicalism did not focus exclusively on the industrial proletariat. The revolutionary

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[13] Goaman, 169, 171, 179.

[14] Graeber, 65–66; See also Goaman, 173.

[15] Besides the chapters in thus study, which demonstrate this trend, see particularly Davide Turcato, "Italian Anarchism as a Transnational Movement 1885–1915", *International Review of Social History*, 52:3, 2007, 407–444.

libertarian socialists envisaged the working class in the broadest terms, and in the colonial and postcolonial world as elsewhere, reached out to peasants, indigenous groups, sub-proletarians, artisans, and radical intellectuals. They recognized the social and political weight of these diverse groups and the potential for forging revolutionary alliances.

Among the most important legacies of classical anarchism and syndicalism was its commitment to holistic individual and collective emancipation. Both Mikhail Bakunin and Piotr Kropotkin stressed the importance, for instance, of "integral education" as essential for human self-realization and dignity. By "integral education" they meant not only instruction in manual and intellectual work, but a process of socialization based on "respect for labour, reason, equality, and freedom."[16] For this education and socialization process to be effective it required an egalitarian and democratic environment, preferably in an autonomous, decentralized, cooperative community.[17]

This prescription for human fulfillment and vision of a libertarian society resonated with anarchists and syndicalists in the colonial and post-colonial world. In societies where access to education and culture were the preserves of elites and strict divisions existed between manual workers and intellectuals, the concept of integral education had popular appeal. To break the elite monopoly on education and culture and to foster self-emancipation and human dignity, anarchists and syndicalists created a dense web of educational and cultural associations. Study circles, popular libraries and universities, independent presses, theatre and art groups, and recreational organisations were founded. Typically these associations were established in or near the neighbourhoods and communities of the popular classes. As a result, they transformed the living environments of the socially and politically excluded into liberated counter-communities.

Retreats and Rearticulations:
Anarchism and Syndicalism, 1939–1989

It is also important to note that there is, in many instances, a direct connection—by ideas, by organizations, and even by individual militants—between classical and contemporary anarchism and syndicalism. Although declining in influence from the late 1920s onwards, anarchism and syndicalism remained a potent force in the 1930s and well beyond. Most obviously, the National Confederation of Labor in Spain (*Confederación Nacional del Trabajo*, or CNT, f. 1910) peaked in that era but there are other examples. In Poland, for instance, the anarchists and syndicalists came to play the leading role in Union of Trade Unions (ZZZ, f. 1931), which had 170,000 members at its height.[18] George Woodcock famously claimed that the defeat of the Spanish Revolution in 1939 "marks the real death ... of the anarchist movement which Bakunin founded".[19] It had, that is, died out as a mass peasant and proletarian movement, although an adulterated, eclectic, and

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[16] Mikhail Bakunin, "Integral Education", in Robert Graham (ed.), *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas*, vol. one, Montréal, Canada: Black Rose Books, (1869) 2005, 220–223; Piotr Kropotkin, "Fields, Factories and Workshops", in Graham (ed.), [1898] 2005, 117–119.

[17] Bakunin, 223–24.

[18] Rafał Chwedoruk, "Polish Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in the 20th Century", Paper presented at the 1st Anarchist Studies Network (ASN, Political Studies Association UK) conference, 4–6 September 2008, Loughborough University, 5–12.

[19] George Woodcock, *Anarchism: a history of libertarian ideas and movements*, new edition with postscript: Penguin, 1975, 443,456– 463.

counter-cultural "neo-anarchism" persisted, "essentially" a movement of privileged, middle class, youth. For Joll, the events in Spain were the last of anarchism's "repeated failures" as a movement of "poor people"; its future, if any, lay outside the modern world, or on its margins, amongst bohemians and rebellious "students, largely middle class ones at that".[20]

This generalization—partly because of its narrow, yet incomplete, Western European focus—is simply incorrect. Anarchism and syndicalism remained important working class and peasant currents in many contexts after 1939—not least in Spain itself, where a large underground persisted throughout the Francoist era. Polish syndicalists played a central role in the anti-Nazi resistance, and operated distinct units in 1944 Warsaw Uprising.[21] The Women Workers' Federation of the syndicalist Local Workers' Federation in Bolivia (f. 1927) and the Culinary Workers' Union in La Paz, hewed to an anarcho-syndicalist line until 1953 and 1958 respectively.[22] Chu Chapei led anarchist guerrillas in southern Yunan, China, in the 1950s.[23] Ukrainian anarchists, including Makhnovists, were prominent in the Karaganda *gulag* uprising in Kazakhstan in 1953.[24]

In Bulgaria, anarchism survived the dictatorships of the 1930s and undertook clandestine work and guerrilla operations during the Second World War, followed by a brief, dramatic postwar upsurge, only to be savagely repressed.[25] In Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Cuba, anarchists and syndicalists played an important role in a number of unions into the 1960s.[26] Anarchism remained an important influence on peasant, worker, and student movements and guerrilla organizations in Mexico from the 1930s to the 1970s.[27] In Korea, a section of the anarchists formed the (electoral) Independent Workers' and Farmers' Party (IWFP) in 1946, and played a central role in the New Democratic Party in the 1960s, and the Democratic Unification Party in the 1970s.[28] The global protests of the late 1960s spurred an important revival, as Woodcock belatedly admitted.[29] While the Spanish CNT grew to 300,000 members in 1978, the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (FAU, f. 1956) waged armed struggle via the Revolutionary Popular Organisation-33 (*Organización Popular Revolucionaria 33 Orientales*, OPR-33), also working within the unions and student movements.[30]

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[20] James Joll, *The Anarchists*, London: Methuen and Co., 1964, 275–280; James Joll, "Anarchism: a living tradition", in David Apter and James Joll (eds.), *Anarchism Today*, London and Basingtoke: Macmillan, 1971.

[21] Chwedoruk, 12–14.

[22] Robert J. Alexander and Eldon M. Parker, *History of Organised Labor in Bolivia*, Westford: Greenwood Press, 2005, 5–75; Ana Cecilia Wadsworth and Ineke Dibbits, *Agitadores de Buen Gusto: Historia del Sindicato de Culinarias (1935–1958)*, La Paz: tahipamu-hisbol, 1989.

[23] Interview with H.L. Wei in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Portraits*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988, 214 *et seq.*

[24] Philip Ruff, "Introduction", in Philip Ruff (ed.), *Anarchy in the USSR: a New Beginning*, London: ASP, 1991, 8–10.

[25] Michael Schmidt with Jack Grancharoff, *The Anarchist-Communist Mass Line: Bulgarian Anarchism Armed*, Johannesburg: Zabalaza Books, 2008, 7–10.

[26] See, for example, Sam Dolgoff, *The Cuban Revolution: a Critical Perspective*, Montréal: Black Rose, 1976, 51–61. Geoffroy de Laforcade, "A Laboratory of Argentine Labour Movements: Dockworkers, Mariners, and the Contours of Class Identity in the Port of Buenos Aires, 1900–1950." Yale University, 2001, 12–17, 311–354; Augustin Souchy, *Beware! Anarchist! A Life for Freedom: the autobiography of Augustin Souchy*, translated by T. Waldinger, Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1992, pp. 142–150, 154.

[27] Donald C. Hodges, *Mexican Anarchism after the Revolution*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

[28] John Crump, "Anarchism and Nationalism in East Asia", *Anarchist Studies*, 4: 1, (1996), 55–57.

[29] Woodcock, 456, 460–462.

[30] Lester Golden, "The Libertarian Movement in Contemporary Spanish Politics", *Antipode: a radical journal of geography*, 10:3 / 11: 1, (1979), 116 footnote 3; María Eugenia Jung and Universindo Rodríguez Díaz, *Juan Carlos Mechoso: anarquista*, Montevideo: Ediciones Trilce, 2006, 7, 30, 50, 64–67, 75–79, 89, 99, 110–115, 132.

This revolutionary continuity helped lay the basis for the big upsurge of the 1990s, and refutes the claim that 1939 marked a break in anarchist and syndicalist history, either in terms of its ideology or its class composition. This is not, however, to deny a more general pattern of anarchists and syndicalists being displaced from their previously leading roles in working class and peasant movements from the late 1920s onwards, accelerating from the 1940s.

Several factors help explain this relative decline, as well as the 1990s resurgence. The anarchist and syndicalist movements of the 1870s to the 1930s were, above all, mass, popular movements and, as such, profoundly shaped by evolving class relations and state systems. Massive and sustained repression by western, Soviet and nationalist regimes undeniably weakened anarchist and syndicalist movements. Examples include V.I. Lenin's crushing of the Makhnovists from the late 1910s, Gerardo Machado's actions against the Cuban movement in the 1920s, the Japanese regime in Korea in the 1920s and 1930s, Getúlio Vargas's Brazil in the 1930s, fascism and the Red Army in Eastern Europe in the 1940s, and Mao Zedong's regime in 1950s China. In Western Europe, only Adolph Hitler's Germany matched Francisco Franco's

Spain as executioner of its own civilians.[31] This repression, levelled far more heavily at the anarchists and the syndicalists than at their reformist counterparts, reflected the very real fear their progress, and deep popular roots, engendered amongst employers and the state.[32]

However, repression was not the only factor in the fading of anarchism and syndicalism. Powerful anarchist and syndicalist movements operated in adverse conditions, including colonialism, dictatorships and civil wars, as papers in this volume, and examples cited in this chapter, have indicated. Nor can repression explain the failure of movements to retain or regain their central role in relatively open contexts: examples would be the movement's decline in the open (for Latin America in this period) presidential era of Chile (1925–1973), and the failure of the Spanish CNT to re-establish itself as a leading force in 1970s, post-Franco, Spain.

Addressing this issue with reference to western contexts, Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe have suggested that improving living conditions linked to consumerism and state welfare, and structured collective bargaining, helped "integrate" working classes. This generated the decline of western working class radicalism generally— including of syndicalism.[33]

This structuralist explanation can be usefully extended to the colonial and postcolonial world, although (as we argue later) it also has some important limitations. If, as Benedict Anderson's foreword and our introductory essay have suggested, the era of the first modern globalization and empire was particularly conducive to anarchist and syndicalist activity, the epoch that followed was not. The cataclysmic events of World War I marked the start of a period of deglobalisation. The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman and Russian empires in the late 1910s was followed by the establishment of nation-states across Eastern Europe. The same period saw the rise of the closed, centrally planned, economy in the new Soviet Union, and the rise of eco-

[31] Julius Ruiz, "A Spanish Genocide? Reflections on the Francoist Repression after the Spanish Civil War", *Contemporary European History*, 14: 2 (2005), 171–172.

[32] Ralph Darlington. *Syndicalism and the Transition to Communism: an International Comparative Analysis*, Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008, 166–167.

[33] Marcel van der Linden and and Wayne Thorpe, "The Rise and Fall of Revolutionary Syndicalism", in Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe (eds.), *Revolutionary Syndicalism: an International Perspective*, Otterup/ Aldershot: Scolar / Gower Publishing Company, 1990, 17–19.

nomic nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s across the postcolonial world, including East Europe, Latin America, Ireland and even colonial South Africa.[34]

Import-substitution industrialisation was only one component of a massive extension of state control over society in these countries: the incorporation of union leaders into the state (or the establishment of state-run unions), a rapid expansion of passport controls, welfare reforms and mass schooling, and sustained surveillance, bureaucratisation and repression. From the 1930s, the great powers also shifted away from *laissez-faire* under the blows of the Great Depression, adopting Keynesian demand-management policies. The 1940s and 1950s saw the remaining empires collapse (with the important exception of the Soviets'), and the application of either Soviet-style planning or importsubstitution industrialisation by the new nation-states.

The new world of globalisation was in place by the 1930s, and was one in which the expansive nation-state (rather than the empire) was the norm, fracturing the peasantry and working class along "national" lines. States had always been viewed as vehicles of class as well as national liberation by sections of the union and other popular movements. This perception was now reinforced by nation-states' growing role in managing and planning society, welfare, employment, and labour markets, in socialising people into national identities and loyalties, and in managing class conflict at a national level. Where the vote existed, it strengthened the image of the enabling, developmental, state.

Nationalism enjoyed a place of unprecedented hegemony globally, with fascist, populist, and even Communist parties adopting a nationalist outlook.[35] On the Left, nationalist, national-populist and Communist parties proved to be powerful competitors with anarchist and syndicalist movements. Not infrequently, they co-opted anarchist and syndicalist discourses and demands. The *Guomindang* in China garnered some anarchist and mass support because of its commitment to revolution, and to wresting control from warlords and imperialism.[36] In Latin America populist governments and parties appealed to workers precisely because they espoused an anti-oligarchical and anti-imperialist line while simultaneously calling for workers' dignity, moral and cultural uplift, union organization, and vowing to satisfy workers' material needs. The populist discourses of Juan Perón's government (1946–1955) in Argentina and the APRA party in Peru (1930–1948) are prime examples of the appropriation of anarchist and syndicalist discursive elements.[37]

The Communist Parties—the dominant anti-capitalist current in many contexts—likewise often absorbed anarchists and syndicalists's political discourses. For example, in Latin America, they took their cue from anarchist and syndicalist movements to advocate a workerpeasant alliance and women's emancipation. The centralisation of the Communists has often been seen as playing

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[34] This section draws upon Philip Bonner, Jonathan Hyslop and Lucien van der Walt (with the assistance of Andries Bezuidenhout and Nicole Ulrich), "Workers' Movements", in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (eds.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, 1121–28.

[35] On fascism and populism see, Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism-Fascism-Populism*, Manchester: Verso Editions, 1982. On communism, see, for example, Michael Forman, *Nationalism and the International Labour Movement: the idea of the nation in socialist and anarchist theory*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998, 115–166.

[36] Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991, esp. 23–24, 252–256.

[37] This is point is implicit in the study by Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946–1976*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, esp. 28–40. On APRA, see, Luis Tejada, "La influencia anarquista en el APRA," *Socialismo y Participación*, no.29, 1985, 97–109.

a central role in their rise, but that factor should not be overstated: their rise was also integrally linked to the very fact of a Soviet Union and a People's Republic of China (PRC).

Communist Parties held a distinct advantage in their competition with anarchists and syndicalists inasmuch as the Soviet Union, the PRC, and their satellites, appeared to be conclusive proof of the virtues of the statist "dictatorship of the proletariat" over anarchist-communism. Besides benefiting from the Soviet Union's prestige, which grew especially rapidly in the 1940s, Communist Parties benefited from direct aid, including cash subsidies, political training, weapons, diplomatic aid, and a vast, unprecedented, outpouring of Marxist publications. "Moscow gold" was not a myth; the Communist Parties were qualitatively different entities to the independent left, including the anarchists and syndicalists. Vigorous critiques of Soviet regimes as "state-capitalist" or as "authoritarian socialist" certainly provided moral ammunition, but were no substitute for ready cash.

The deglobalised period was, clearly, not one conducive to anarchism and syndicalism. States repressed more efficiently, yet commanded a new degree of loyalty; class struggles were managed from above; migration slowed; the "nation" was often a far more immediate reality than the international proletariat; the anarchists and syndicalists' key rivals, the Communists, received state subsidies; the bureaucracies of the international union federations formed from 1945, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, were deeply embroiled in the activities of the rival state blocs of the Cold War. Meanwhile, levels of class struggle declined from their peak in the 1910s and early 1920s, weakening *all* working class and peasant movements—at least until the upsurge of the late 1960s.[38]

Structural factors certainly help explain the retreat of anarchism and syndicalism starting in the 1920s; concomitantly, the change in these conditions, including a new phase of globalisation, starting from the 1970s, the rise of neo-liberalism and the associated decline of welfare as well as of national-level state-brokered class compromises, and the collapse of the Eastern bloc, is integrally linked to the anarchist and syndicalist resurgence of the 1990s.

However, structuralist explanations, in locating the decline of anarchism and syndicalism in factors entirely external to the movement, provide an incomplete picture. The Communist Parties were undoubtedly shaped by their relationship with Moscow (or Beijing), but were never simply the tools of Soviet (or Maoist) foreign policy. The very existence of mass Communist Parties (all with a demonstrably deep working class roots) base, in both the great powers (notably Italy and France) and in the less industrialised countries (like Brazil, Egypt and South Africa) demonstrates that significant, popular, radical currents continued to exist despite growing state power and largesse, including "Moscow gold." The global revolt of "1968" further demonstrated that the working class was very far from being "integrated" in the West, East or South.

It is necessary then to examine some of the internal problems in anarchist and syndicalist movements. The movement was always a diverse and contested one, and there were weaknesses in some of its wings that had adverse consequences for its durability. One of these was the excessive heterogeneity that characterised many contexts. In China, for instance, there were 92 different groups formed between 1919 and 1925, but no national federation or common programme,[39] creating space for the rapid growth of the more efficient (but initially far smaller)

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[38] Darlington, 147–151.
[39] Dirlik, 11–13.

Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The tendency to schism was arguably accelerated by the rise of Bolshevism.[40]

Nestor Makhno, reflecting on the weakness of the Russian anarchist movement (outside the Ukraine, that is), saw it as lying precisely in a state of "chronic general disorganisation"—a state, he stressed, that was at odds with Bakunin's approach.[41] Bakunin had formed the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy (f. 1868), to work within the International Workingmen's Association, or First International (f. 1864). This was "a secret organisation with a well-determined programme—atheist, socialist, anarchist, revolutionary".[42] Without a homogenous programme and a unitary organisation, Bakunin, Makhno and many others argued, the movement was bound to dissipate its forces unnecessarily. This advice was not, however, always heeded.

Another weakness—again, not universal—was the replacement of a clear programme for decisive action for revolutionary transition by a naïve faith in "a miraculous solution to the problem".[43] This led, at times, to alliances that contradicted basic principles and undermined movement autonomy, power and politics.

Papers in this volume have noted Mexico's House of the World Worker's (*Casa del Obrero Mundial*, COM or *Casa*) ill-considered alliance with Venustiano Carranza's regime against the peasant Zapatistas, and the uncritical involvement of a section of Chinese and Korean anarchists in formations like the *Guomindang*, the Korean Provisional Government, and the IWFP. More famously, the Spanish CNT joined the Popular Front Government in 1936 precisely because (argued the dissident CNT faction, the Friends of Durruti) "the leadership had no idea which course of action to pursue", despite "lyricism aplenty".[44]

The problem did not arise from anarchists and syndicalists entering into alliances with a wide range of forces: as this volume has shown, alliances were beneficial to movements in contexts like Argentina, China, Cuba, Egypt, Korea, Peru and the Ukraine). Rather, it arose when alliances substituted for, and contradicted, revolution itself.

Again, this was not a flaw inherent in anarchism or syndicalism—as the writings of Bakunin, and the activities of the *Makhnovischna* and the Korean People's Association in Manchuria, discussed in this volume, indicate.[45] Indeed, the CNT itself had resolved at its May 1936 congress at Zaragoza on the necessity of complete expropriation, coordinated and defended by a coordinated national military using modern military techniques. As Makhno reaffirmed Bakunin's insistence on ideological and organisational unity, so the Friends of Durruti reaffirmed his stress on the necessity of a "National Defence Council", elected by and accountable to the unions and mass movements, and the forcible destruction of state power.[46]

[40] Darlington, 167–177.

[41] Nestor Makhno, Piotr Archinov, Ida Mett, Valevsky, Linsky, *The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists*, Dublin: Workers Solidarity Movement, [1926] 2001, 4.

[42] Errico Malatesta, quoted in Max Nettlau, *A Short History of Anarchism*, London: Freedom Press, (1934) 1996, 130.

[43] José Peirats, *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution*, London: Freedom Press, [1964] 1990, 13–14.

[44] The Friends of Durruti, *Towards a Fresh Revolution*, Durban: Zabalaza Books, [1938, 1978] no date given, 12, 24.

[45] Bakunin, "The Programme of the International Brotherhood", in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy: Selected Works by the Activist-Founder of World Anarchism*, London: George Allen and Unwin, [1872] 1971, 152–154.

[46] The Friends of Durruti, 25. For more on the debates on these issues, see van der Walt and Schmidt, 190–209.

Conclusions: the future in the present

In a very practical, non-utopian sense, classical anarchism and syndicalism, especially as it was manifest in the colonial and post-colonial world, bequeathed a legacy of struggles for holistic human emancipation and dignity. Playing a key role in popular and emancipatory struggles in the colonial and postcolonial world from the 1870s to the 1930s and beyond, anarchism and syndicalism must be given its due weight in the larger story of struggles against imperialism, national oppression and racial domination. Likewise, the history of anarchism and syndicalism must be recognised as a global one, where large-scale movements like the one in Spain, played a key role but were neither exceptional nor isolated; rather, they were part of an interconnected subaltern resistance movement that spanned the continents in a struggle to remake the world and that, in its most advanced forms, faced the question of power seriously.

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